■www.inq7.net Complete list of successful med board examinees

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WIN A 21" TV! TEXT 2910

MAGSAYSAY, 89

When first ladies were . . .

By Fe Zamora

AS A politician's wife, Luz Banzon-Magsaysay was a reluctant public figure. But when her husband became President, she played the part of first la-

WHEN/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY
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BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

DENR test for metro air quality: Check your collar

By Volt Contreras and Martin P. Marfil

TO BREATHE or not to breathe easy, that is the question.

Residents of Metro Manila, many of them blue in the face from pondering the dilemma

DENR/ A20

EH... BAKIT MAS MAITIM ANG DUMI SA ILONG NGAYON KESA NOON?

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Wednesday, August 18, 2004 ★★ 56 pages / 5 sections / vol. 19 / no. 252 P18 website: www.inq7.net

Tax credit row imperils revenue bills

By Christine O. Avendaño, Cynthia D. Balana and Armand N. Nocum

THE DISMISSAL of collection cases filed by the Bureau of Customs against companies that fraudulently acquired tax credit certificates (TCCS) totalling P1 billion has given legislators ammunition in opposing proposals to impose new taxes.

"If this is the way we are handling cases of government for its losses from tax cheats why should we burden our people with new taxes?" Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile said yesterday after the INQUIRER reported that various regional trial courts had dismissed 15 cases because of the BOC's lack of interest to prosecute.

Seven more cases are up for dismissal for the same reason. The 22 cases involve a total of P1.1 billion in foregone taxes.

Enrile, who investigated the tax credit scam in the Senate in 1999, said it would be "unfair" to the people if government would raise taxes and squeeze money from them "in order to solve its financial burden."

He asked the Senate to conduct an inquiry into why the cases filed by the government against companies with fraudulently acquired TCCs ended up being dismissed in court. His colleagues in the House of Representatives also called for a probe.

But Malacañang shrugged off its pitiful record in its legal battle against corporations that misuse TCCs.

"The government is determined to prosecute tax evaders to the hilt. We may have some setbacks but we will continue pushing through," said presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye at a briefing.

TCCs are refund payments made by the government on the duties and taxes paid by export enterprises for imported materials that they use.

Instead of a cash refund, the One Stop Shop Interagency Tax Credit and Drawback Center (OSS), which was created in 1992, issues TCCs which the companies use to settle their tax obligations. Of the three kinds of refunds, only the value-added tax refunds were encashable. Duty draw-

TAX/ A22

BOC exec not new to controversy

By Armand N. Nocum

AN OFFICIAL of the Bureau of Customs, who is being blamed for the dismissal by various regional trial courts of collection cases against companies with fraudulently acquired tax credit certificates (TCCs), is no stranger to charges of causing the government to lose millions of pesos in revenue.

Tax credits are refund payments made by the government on the duties and taxes paid by exporter enterprises for imported materials that they use. TCCs, which are transferable under certain conditions, can be used to settle tax obligations.

BOC/ A22

DAVAO BLOOMS

RENY PAMPOLINA

The streets of Davao City burst into colors that the rains failed to wash away during the city's celebration of the annual Kadayawan sa Dabaw festival. Street performers, like these students, turned the city's roads into a stage to thank the heavens for the bountiful harvests.

NPA set to free 2 soldiers today

By Christian V. Esguerra and PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

SHE IS six months pregnant but she is ready to walk miles just to see him free again.

"I can't wait to see him," the wife of Army Lt. Ronaldo Fidelino told the INQUIRER yesterday. "Because of my excitement, I can't even feel that I'm pregnant."

Leah Fidelino's bags are packed and she is ready to go.

So is Mariano Nemeño, brother of Pfc. Ronel Nemeño.

Held captive for nearly six months by the Communist New People's Army, Ronaldo and Ronel are scheduled to be freed by the guerrillas somewhere in Bicol today.

NPA/ A20

Smokey Mountain agreement terminated in August last year

By Fe Zamora

THE JOINT venture agreement between the government and R-II Builders Inc. to develop the Smokey Mountain garbage dump into a residential community was actually terminated last year, according to a memorandum of agreement dated Aug. 27, 2003, and signed by the National Housing Authority (NHA) and the developer.

With the termination, the government said it would pay businessman Reghis Romero's R-II Builders P250 million, supposedly in partial settlement of expenses incurred since the project began in 1995. A three-hectare portion of the 17-hectare Vitas industrial area in Tondo will also be transferred to the corporation as part of its compensation as "developer."

But the agreement signed by NHA general manager Edgardo Pamintuan and R-II Builders president Leopoldo Sanchez stated that the P250 million would be held in escrow at the Land Bank of the Philippines and would be paid to the corporation after a validation process.

The balance of the P1.8 billion in expenses being claimed by R-II Builders would be settled in cash or bonds "or any combination thereof." The amount would be determined after a validation process, the document also said.

The P250 million was part of a P480-million fund ordered released by President Macapagal-Arroyo to continue the Smokey Mountain Development and Reclamation Project, which had been at a standstill since 1998 for lack of funds.

The P480-million fund was approved by the Cabinet on July 30, 2002, for placement in the Smokey Mountain Asset Pool (SMAP) on condition that the government would unilaterally cancel the original agreement dated March 19, 1993, and other collateral contracts with R-II Builders.

The SMAP, with Home Insurance Guarantee Corp. and Philippine National Bank as trustees, was formed in 1994.

The termination of the contract with R-II Builders was to have paved

SMOKEY MOUNTAIN/ A20

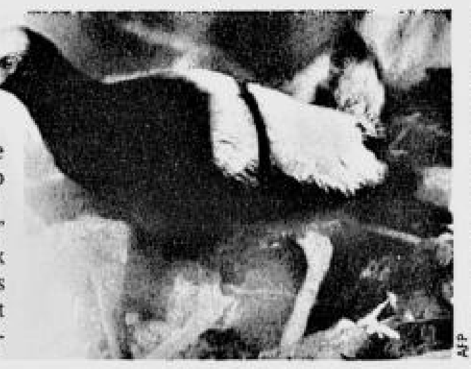
Rare bird found on Babuyan isle

THIS ONE'S truly a *Rara avis*.

Filipino and British wildlife researchers said they had discovered what appeared to be a rare, new species of flightless bird on the tiny island of Calayan, the largest island in the Babuyan island group that lies between Batanes and Luzon.

The bird, to be called the "Calayan Rail," is the size of a small crow and has dark brown plumage and bright orange-red legs and beak, said Filipino conservationist Carl Oliveros, who helped lead the expedition that found it.

RARE BIRD/ A20



AFP

WILL the Calayan Rail go the way of the dodo?

ADIEU

RUDY ESPERAS

Priests celebrate the life of engineer Jose Z. Apostol, husband of INQUIRER founding chair Eugenia D. Apostol and one of the original incorporators of this newspaper, during a requiem Mass at the Santuario de San Antonio in Forbes Park. Apostol's ashes were interred yesterday at the church crypt.

NO PROBABLE CAUSE?

Prosecutor dismisses criminal charges vs Jaworski sons, foes

By Luige A. del Puerto

THE VERY rich are different from you and me, F. Scott Fitzgerald once wrote.

Yes, fellow American writer Ernest Hemingway supposedly retorted, they have more money.

Or is it because they are untouchable?

The Mandaluyong Prosecutor's Office has dismissed the criminal charges filed by the police in June against the scions of two wealthy families in Metro Manila, according to a resolution obtained by the INQUIRER yesterday.

Ryan Jaworski, Ron Michael Jaworski, Elton Yap, Mark Yap and several John Does were accused of turning the area behind the Saisaki Restaurant in East Greenhills, Mandaluyong City, into a virtual war zone on the evening of June 21.

The Jaworskis are brothers to Pasig City Rep. Robert "Dodot" Jaworski Jr. and sons of former senator and basketball legend Robert Jaworski.

The Yaps belong to the family of a rich Mandaluyong businessman.

Although police said they could not confirm it, they said they believed the shoot-out was sparked by a quarrel over uncollected bets on the results of the National Basketball Association (NBA) finals, supposedly running into thousands of pesos.

They said they believed the Jaworskis were out to collect from Elton Yap, who allegedly owed a schoolmate money from the betting. The schoolmate supposedly had asked someone on the side of the Jaworskis for help in collecting his winnings.

In dismissing the charges of alarm and scandal, illegal discharge of firearms and malicious mischief, Prosecutor Elenita C. Dimaguila said the po-

PROSECUTOR/ A8

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The western sections of Luzon and Visayas will have occasional rains. The rest of Luzon and Visayas will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. Mindanao will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers.
SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/08/18/04

Metro Manila	Occasional Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Occasional Rains
Baguio	Occasional Rains	Roxas	Occasional Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Occasional Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Occasional Rains	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Occasional Rains	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Occasional Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Occasional Rains	Davao	Partly Cloudy

Second FRONTPAGE

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'Reward OK but we want justice'

ILOILO CITY—While they welcomed the P3-million reward offered for information on the killers of journalists, the families of the victims and media organizations said only decisive government action would bring justice to the victims.

"Capturing the killers needs the persistent and concerted effort of the government and law-enforcement agencies," said Jose Marte Nava, the son of Josef Nava, editor-publisher of the Iloilo City-based news magazine "Visayan Life Today" who was killed in October 1997.

But Emily Ureta said the reward offer could strengthen the chances of her husband Rolando's murderer being solved.

"Maybe this time my prayers will be answered," she said in a telephone interview. Rolando, program director of RMN affiliate dyKR radio in Kalibo, Aklan, was gunned down in January 2001.

Nava and Ureta are among the 55 journalists killed since 1986 whose cases have remained unsolved. Six journalists have been killed so far this year.

Inday Espina-Varona, national chair of the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines, said the offer of a reward would only boost the price of hired guns but would not stop the killings.

"What is needed is solid police work to arrest, prosecute and convict the killers," she said.

Varona said the NUJP and other media organizations were willing to cooperate with the police to help solve the murders. NUJP officers held a dialogue with Philippine National Police Deputy Director General Edgar Aglipay on Monday.

Aglipay directed police units to form teams composed of 10 policemen each to look into each of the unsolved murders and hunt down the suspects.

Despite the increased bounty, the International Federation of Journalists, which has a membership of 500,000 worldwide, said government efforts to curb the rising death toll among journalists appeared to have failed.

"It is time a strong and simple mesage was sent to all—that shooting journalists will not be tolerated and those who commit these crimes will be found and brought to justice," said IFJ president Christopher Warren in an e-mailed statement dated Aug. 16.

"The toll continues to mount and the failure to bring people to justice now stands as a shocking indictment of the authorities. It is time for this to change," said Warren.

In Cagayan de Oro City, four media practitioners started their three-day hunger fast on Monday to pressure the government into action.

Cagayan de Oro Press Club president Jerry Orcullo, Sunstar Cagayan de Oro photojournalist Joey Nacalaban, dxCO Radyo Pilipino station manager Jonas Bustamante and dxCO commentator Ronnie Waniwan have decided to take only water until Wednesday night.

Various media organizations, which formed an alliance named "Kilusang Alsa Media," are set to hold weeklong activities in Cagayan de Oro City. There will be nightly vigils and a march-rally on Saturday, the 21st anniversary of the assassination of opposition leader Benigno Aquino Jr.

Neophyte Sen. Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. yesterday offered his P200,000 salary from his TV show "Idol ko si Kap" as a reward for information that would lead to the arrest of those behind the journalist killings.

Revilla, who plays a barangay captain in the TV show, said his office will coordinate with media organizations to "establish the guidelines and criteria for the release of the reward to whistle blowers." *Nestor P. Burgos Jr., PDI Visayas Bureau with reports from Grace Cantal-Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau, and Christine Avendaño, Metro Manila*

Might newsman have been saved?

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—His wife Leah was in tears and pleading with the staff at the General Santos Doctors Hospital to save the life of GMA Super Radyo reporter Jonathan Abayon.

But they ignored her.

The hospital, run by St. Paul Sisters, was demanding a deposit of P50,000, an amount Abayon's family could not produce immediately.

Roniel Degorio, another GMA Super Radyo reporter here and a close friend of Abayon's, talked to a Mr. Maduramente, supposedly the hospital's billing supervisor.

Maduramente stressed that it was hospital policy to ask for a deposit. He suggested that Degorio act as a guarantor for Abayon and his family.

"I told Mr. Maduramente Abayon was an employee of GMA Super Radyo and the company would shoulder the expenses since he was shot in the line of duty," Degorio said. "I couldn't sign as guarantor because I was just an ordinary employee, so I told my station manager."

Station manager Christopher Guarin went straight to the hospital and signed as guarantor.

Meanwhile, Abayon's chances of survival got slimmer.

Leah told the INQUIRER that all this time her husband was in the emergency room with only one hospital staffer there, operating a device which sucked blood from his mouth.

Based on the report aired by GMA Super Radyo, Abayon was brought to the hospital at 4 a.m. on Aug. 8. He was wheeled into the operating room only at 10 a.m.

The operation ended at 2 p.m. He was brought to the intensive care unit but died 20 hours later on Aug. 9 at 11:25 a.m.

Again, the hospital demanded immediate payment of the bill before they would release Abayon's remains. And again, Guarin signed a promissory note stating that the bills would be settled in two weeks' time.

The hospital released the body four hours later.

The INQUIRER tried to contact hospital administrator Sister Azelita Sarnillo for their side. The staffer who took the call said Sarnillo was unavailable and declined to give a statement.

Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Rape rap against Osmeña junked

THE DEPARTMENT of Justice has dismissed the rape charge filed by an admitted male sex worker against former Sen. John Osmeña for lack of probable cause.

In a four-page resolution, Senior State Prosecutor Emilie Fe Malabrigo-de los Santos noted that neither the complainant, Diego Gomez, nor his lawyer attended the preliminary investigation of the case despite the subpoenas sent to them. They also never gave an explanation for their absences.

"Such conduct on his part erodes the merits of his claims," De los Santos said.

Gomez had claimed that Osmeña raped him in a Tagaytay City house on Feb. 5, 2004. He was allegedly paid P15,000 for his services.

Osmeña had dismissed the charge as "pure and simple harassment" since he was running for reelection at the time. He lost in the May 10 elections, however.

In dismissing the charge, De los Santos also gave weight to Senate records which showed that Osmeña was present at the Senate on Feb. 5. *Philip C. Tubeza*

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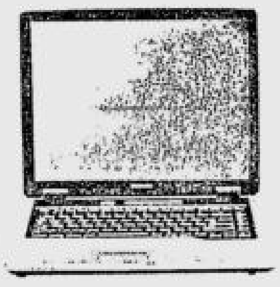

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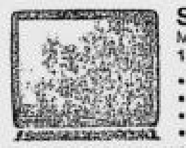

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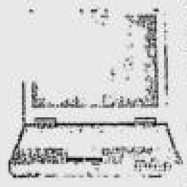

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3 killed as gov't troops, MILF rebels clash

By Alcuin Papa

GOVERNMENT troops clashed with Moro Islamic Islamic Front separatist rebels in Maguindanao yesterday, leaving two guerrillas and one soldier dead and breaching a cease-fire agreement just days before exploratory peace talks were scheduled to open.

Reports reaching Camp Aguinaldo said the clash occurred in Barangay Dapiawan, Datu Saudi Ampatuan, Maguindanao at about 8:00 a.m. yesterday between the MILF and troops from the 6th Infantry Division.

Armed Forces spokesperson Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero said a group of soldiers, police and government militia was investigating the killing of two civilians in the town when they were fired upon by the rebels.

"We hope that this incident won't derail the ongoing peace process. We are doing our best actually to prevent these things from happening. Schemes are already being implemented on the ground to prevent any escalation of the conflict," Lucero said.

He said it was the first clash with the rebels since mid-2003. He said the government troops were unaware that there were MILF rebels in the town.

Lucero said the incident has been reported to the MILF representative in the coordinating committee on the cessation of hostilities (CCCH) by Brig. Gen. Alexander Yano, the AFP representative to the CCCH.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu said the shoot-out was connected to a family feud within the predominantly Muslim community, which may have involved some MILF members and government militia.

"This has no bearing at all [on the peace talks] unless the military blows it out of proportion," Kabalu told AP.

The government and the MILF signed a cease-fire agreement in 1997 but negotiators are still working on a political settlement to end the three decade-old Muslim insurgency. A joint communique in 2002 strengthened the first cease-fire agreement.

Since then, sporadic clashes in central Mindanao have marred the cease fire.

In 2000, the Estrada administration launched an all-out war against the rebels resulting in the takeover of 46 MILF camps by the military and ending all formal peace negotiations.

On Monday, government officials and MILF leaders sounded upbeat about prospects for peace, saying the MILF's cooperation in the military operation last week that probably killed Pentagon kidnap-for-ransom gang leader Tahir Alonto and 13 of his men have bolstered peace efforts.

Kabalu went so far as to declare that peace talks would resume in Kuala Lumpur as early as this week. *With a report from Charlie C. Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Pinay OFW defies ban, sneaks into Iraq

By TJ Burgonio

A FILIPINO overseas worker, aided by her Jordanian employer, managed to slip into Iraq this month despite the existing ban on the deployment of workers to the war-torn country, a foreign affairs official said yesterday.

Divina Gay, however, was abandoned by her employer in Baghdad even before she could start work. Luckily, she found her way to the Philippine embassy there with the help of an American soldier, Undersecretary Jose Brillantes said.

"Suddenly she couldn't find the employer and she was left abandoned in Baghdad. She eventually found her way to the Philippine embassy after she approached an American soldier," Brillantes said at a briefing.

Gay will be repatriated to Manila this week, said Brillantes, undersecretary for migrant workers affairs.

Pending her repatriation, the foreign affairs department has sought an investigation into the circumstances of her entry into Iraq, and asked the embassy there, as well as in Jordan to locate her employer, Al-Abdul Kudam, for possible prosecution.

"We are asking the Philippine embassy in Iraq, together with the Philippine embassy in Amman, Jordan, to locate and find the employer so we can take the necessary steps to protect the interest of Filipino domestic helpers and for justice in this particular case," Brillantes said.

Gay's entry into Iraq alarmed officials because it showed that Filipinos could still get there despite the ban on the deployment of workers.

"There is some form or a system of entry that puts Filipinos in danger... This is something that we should look into," he said.

The Philippines had forged agreements with Kuwait, Jordan and Saudi Arabia to prevent Filipino truck drivers from crossing their borders into Iraq.

Asked if there was a need to expand the pacts to include Filipino domestic helpers in view of Gay's case, Brillantes said: "I would think so. The POEA (Philippine Overseas Employment Administration) is taking the necessary action."

Books on media launched

WHY ARE the media star-struck? Why do they focus too much on celebrities and conflict? Why does media reporting tend to be superficial?

Three books on the media to be launched today by the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ) and the Center for Media Freedom (CMFR) will attempt to answer these questions. The launching, at 9:30 a.m. at the Ateneo Professional Schools at Rockwell, Makati, will also feature a panel discussion with the book authors and media experts.

"News for Sale: The Corruption and Commercialization of the Philippine Media" by Chay Florentino Hofileña documents bribe-giving and other forms of wrongdoing in the press, focusing on the new forms of corruption that emerged in the coverage of the 2004 elections.

The second book, "Cockfight, Horserace, Boxing Match (Why Elections are Covered as Sport)," explains why election coverage is superficial, personality-oriented and focused on conflict. Authored by PCIJ's Sheila S. Coronel, the book also looks at the factors that influence the direction of election reporting.

The third book, "Citizen's Media Monitor: A report on the Campaign and Elections Coverage in the Philippines," presents the results of the CMFR's content analysis of media reports of major TV networks and broadsheets during the 2004 elections.

For more information, interested parties may contact marketing@pcij.org or call 929-3571.

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'Overpopulation doesn't cause poverty'

By Martin P. Marfil and Blanche S. Rivera

GROUPS opposed to birth control yesterday said it was not true that large populations breed poverty since countries with large populations were generally more prosperous.

They said the real problem confronting impoverished countries like the Philippines was governance.

"Population control is a wrong science. It is not true that population is the cause of poverty," said Dr. Angelita Aguirre of Doctors for Life, addressing a population forum yesterday.

The Philippines has 82 million people, making it the 12th most populous country on earth.

Aguirre said the Philippines could become prosperous with "proper leadership, proper processes, the right economic priorities" and if corruption was eliminated.

"Why is Japan richer? . . . Countries with bigger populations are generally more prosperous," she said, speaking in Filipino and English.

Japan, with a population of 127.3 million, has a population density of 333 per sq km compared to the Philippines' 197 per sq km against total land area of 377,835 sq km and 300,000 sq km, respectively.

Another member of Doctors for Life, Victoria Monzon, noted that the Philippines' fertility rate of 6 per woman in the 1970s had been brought down to 2.6.

"Did we get rich? Did we improve? Overpopulation is not the primary cause of poverty . . . No less than a United Nations study said that 50 percent of our budget goes to corruption and most of our budget goes to debt payments," she said.

Aguirre argued that it was not population growth that brought about prosperity but prosperity that slowed down population growth.

In America and some European countries where population control is actively practiced, the governments are now trying to encourage women to bear children, she said.

Monzon said that some of these Western countries are anticipating a decline in population and are now studying cloning.

Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman, who was at the forum, explained his proposal to reduce the population by offering incentives to families with two children or less. Lagman's so-called "two-child policy" bill is being opposed by Church and pro-life groups.

Lagman urged the people to try and read his proposal with "open minds," adding that consultations have been scheduled for the bill.

In a related development, a population expert has warned that the rate of abortions would increase in the next few years because women are unable to plan the size of their families.

Aurora Perez, former executive director of the UP Population Institute, said the women likely to abort their babies were not the young, unprepared mothers but those aged 40 to 44 who had unwanted pregnancies.

"Many think that abortions are done mostly by young women, but it's actually the older women who no longer want children but get pregnant who abort their babies," Perez, country coordinator of the non-government organization Futures Group International, told a population seminar at the Subic Bay Freeport on Monday.

Abortion is illegal in the Philippines, but health agencies estimate that there are at least 300,000 abortions in the country every year.

"One reason is the unmet need for family planning, which is still not being addressed. Another is the withdrawal of donor agencies giving contraceptives," Perez said.

Etta files bill to raise status of gays, lesbians

A PARTY-LIST congresswoman yesterday sought to correct the "second-class status" of lesbians and gays in society by filing a bill that would define and penalize practices prejudicial to members of the homosexual community.

Akbayan Rep. Loretta Ann "Etta" Rosales said House Bill No. 634, or the Anti-Discrimination Act which she filed recently, would penalize the most deliberate instances of discrimination, particularly those acts based on "sex or sexual orientation and gender identity, whether actual or perceived."

Rosales, chair of the House committee on human rights, said the passage of the bill would lessen, if not totally eradicate, all forms of discrimination against members of the so-called third sex.

"The Philippines is a signatory to numerous international agreements that seek to ensure respect for the human rights of all persons regardless of sex or sexual orientation or any other condition. But in this country, gays and lesbians are still considered second-class citizens," she said.

The bill said it would be "discriminatory for any person, natural or judicial, to deny access to public service such as military service, medical and other health services, the use of establishments, facilities or services, including housing, open to the general public, to any person, on the basis of sexual orientation and/or gender."

Likewise, it would be unlawful to include sexual orientation and gender identity in the criteria for the hiring, promotion and dismissal of workers, and in the determination of employee compensation, training, incentives, privileges, benefits or allowances.

Cynthia Balana

RP, China join forces vs illegal drugs

By Nelson Forte Flores

THE PHILIPPINES and China have agreed to exchange vital information on illegal drug operations which could lead to more drug busts here as most drug traffickers arrested in the country were Chinese, according to Undersecretary Jose Calida, executive director of the Dangerous Drugs Board.

The Chinese government's Narcotics Control Bureau has also agreed to help set up an information network among Asian countries in or near the Golden Triangle area of Burma, Laos and Thailand, said Calida who returned on Sunday from the 2nd Annual Training and Project Status Meeting of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Beijing.

"The Chinese government's cooperation in our anti-drugs operation would surely have a positive impact," he said.

The new agreement follows an earlier one between then Interior Secretary Jose Lina Jr. and the NCB in August 2003 under which the two countries agreed to conduct and coordinate joint anti-illegal drug operations and to set up workplaces for the PDEA in Beijing and for the NCB in Manila.

The new agreement involves, among other things, the updating of data concerning drug syndicates operating in China and the region, said Calida.

He said he used the conference to debunk international perceptions that the Philippines had become a major manufacturer of illegal substances like methamphetamine hydrochloride or shabu; Ecstasy, an amphetamine-type stimulant, and heroin.

He said this mistaken perception came about because of the confessions extracted from a number of drug traffickers who had been arrested abroad.

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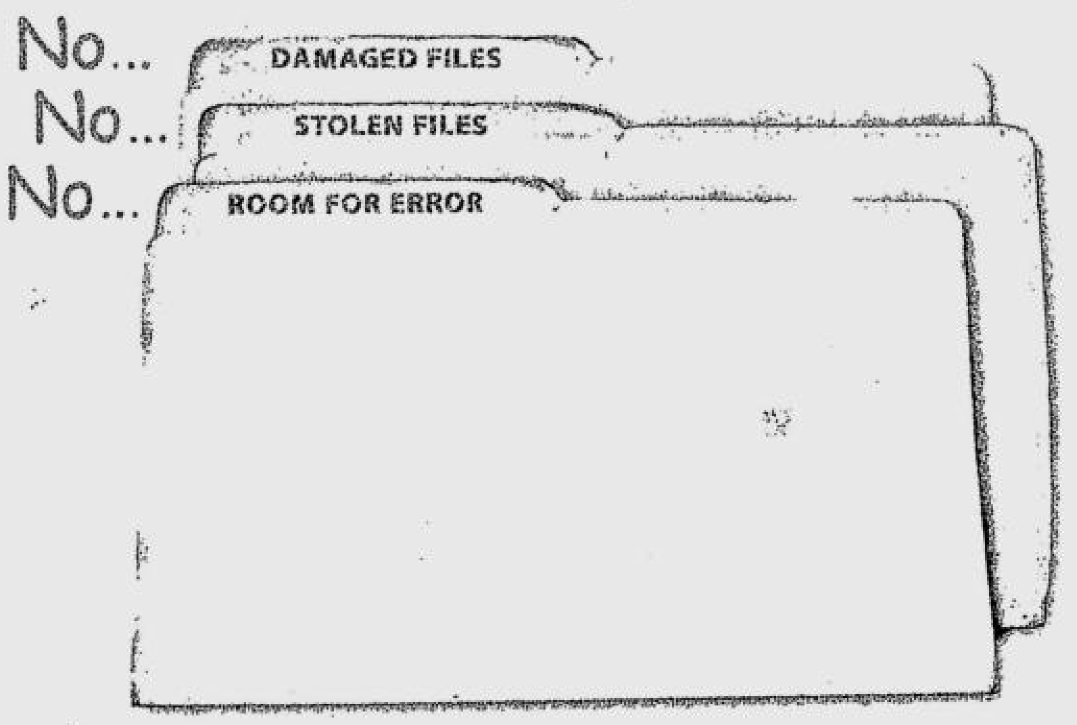

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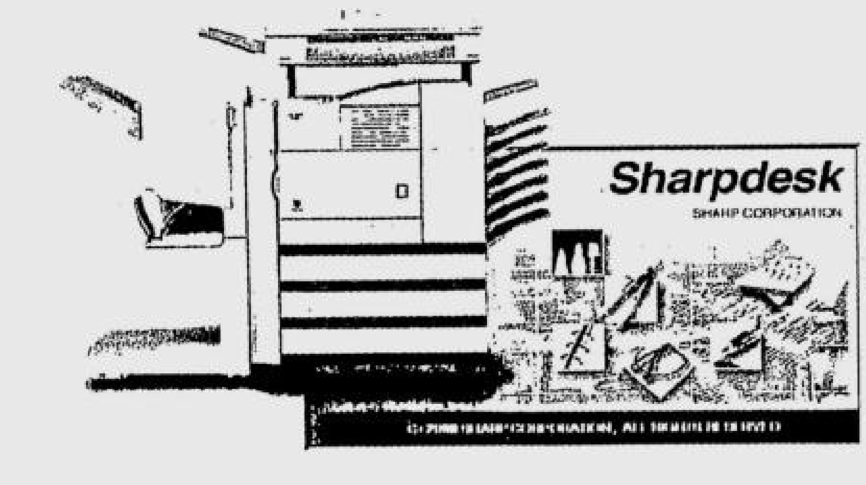

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Corrections

IN THE June 30 issue, an Entertainment story on Page A32—"Celia Rodriguez: We deserve more respect"—misstated the name of the scriptwriter of the movie "Naglalayag," who won the best story award in the 2004 Manila Film Festival. The winner's correct name is Irma V. Dimaranan—not Irma Adlawan. She also won the award for best screenplay.

* * *

IN THE Aug. 2 issue, a front-page story—"Marikina, Pasig, Davao top business attractions"—erroneously described ClientLogic as a telecommunications company. ClientLogic is engaged in call center services. Danilo Sebastian Reyes, country manager of ClientLogic Philippines, also said his firm believed in the highly skilled work force of Baguio City and was not dismayed with its telecommunications infrastructure, contrary to a Department of Trade and Industry official's statements quoted in the story.

* * *

IN THE Aug. 8 issue, a SundayBiz story on Page B5—"Mentor helps set this SME on path to success"—was accompanied by a photo with a misleading caption that read: "The Dizons." The caption should have read: "Raymund Dizon with volunteer mentor Connie Cagahastian."

* * *

IN THE Aug. 16 issue, the front-page banner story—"P2M offered for info on media murders"—erroneously reported that martyred Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. covered the Vietnam War in the 1960s. It was the Korean War in the 1950s that Aquino covered when he was then a reporter of The Manila Times.

* * *

THE INQUIRER editorial on Aug. 14—"Red language"—misstated that the leaders of the National Democratic Front are "in Norwegian exile." While the peace talks are being held in Oslo, Norway, the NDF leaders are in exile in the Netherlands, not Norway.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to Gerry Lirio, city editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City; fax Nos. 897-4793/94; e-mail addresses:glirio@inquirer.com.ph and daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Raul Palabrica, readers' advocate, the same address and fax numbers as those of the city editor, and e-mail address:rpalabrica@inquirer.com.ph.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, August 18, 2004
20th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Ezk 34:1-11
Gospel: Mt 20:1-16

Jesus said to his disciples, "This story throws light on the kingdom of heaven. A landowner went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. He agreed to pay the workers a salary of a silver coin for the day, and sent them to his vineyard.

"He went out again at about nine in the morning, and seeing others idle in the square, he said to them: 'You, too, go to my vineyard and I will pay you what is just.' So they went.

"The owner went out at midday and again at three in the afternoon, and he did the same. Finally he went out at the last working hour - it was the eleventh - and he saw others standing there. So he said to them: 'Why do you stay idle the whole day?' They answered: 'Because no one has hired us.' The master said: 'Go and work in my vineyard.'

"When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager: 'Call the workers and pay them their wage, beginning with the last and ending with the first.' Those who had come to work at the eleventh hour turned up and were given a denarius each (a silver coin). When it was the turn of the first, they thought they would receive more. But they, too, received a denarius each. So, on receiving it, they began to grumble against the landowner.

"They said: 'These last hardly worked an hour, yet you have treated them the same as us who have endured the day's burden and heat.' The owner said to one of them: 'Friend, I have not been unjust to you. Did we not agree on a denarius a day? So take what is yours and go. I want to give to the last the same as I give to you. Don't I have the right to do as I please with my money? Why are you envious when I am kind?'

"So will it be: the last will be first, the first will be last."

Commentary

"A landowner went out early." Johann Tauler (14th century) focused on the word "early". God takes the first step, God always works "early", he said. He sees the whole sweep of Revelation in this word "early". "In one sense our dear Lord went out early by His eternal birth, by which he came forth from the Father's heart, without ever leaving it. In another sense our dear Lord Jesus Christ went out early when He took human nature upon Himself, so that He might make terms with us and call us back into His vineyard."

It's a great word: "early". It expresses readiness, eagerness, determination. The way you get up in the morning shows how your day will be. If you roll out of bed at the last minute you are telling yourself, body and soul, that life is just dragging you along. If someone played music like that, what a horrible sound it would be! It's wonderful to listen to music, even when it's not the greatest. The notes arrive with such confidence and timing, and they give themselves completely. They are such bright beings; you couldn't imagine them dragging themselves along reluctantly. God must be like that.

When we do get the idea of "early" we tend to overdo it! Everyone wants to be the first note! We race one another for the first place. But "early" doesn't have to mean "first". If I'm in the middle of a piece, or at the end, surely that's the right time, and I can give myself as fully as if I were the first note!

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Ninoy's day a special non-working holiday

NINOY Aquino Day on Saturday will be a special non-working holiday around the country.

President Macapagal-Arroyo had declared Aug. 21 of every year a holiday to commemorate the anniversary of the 1983 assassination of the former senator and opposition leader.

The Senate and the House of Representatives enacted Republic Act No. 9256 in 2003 and 2004, respectively, making the day a regular holiday.

President Arroyo signed the measure into law on Feb. 25, 2004, during the 18th anniversary of People Power I which was spurred by Aquino's assassination on the tarmac of the then Manila International Airport as he was returning from exile in the United States. The airport has since been renamed the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

The President also directed the Edsa Commission to come up with commemoration rites to observe this year's anniversary. *Juliet Labog-Javellana*

Educator: Blame RP problems on leaders

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Blame it on our leaders.

Ateneo de Manila University president Fr. Bienvenido Nebres, S.J., said the quality of the leaders who are running the country should be faulted for the country's failing economy.

Addressing 2,000 student leaders at Teachers Camp here on Tuesday, Nebres said Philippine leaders in the last 30 years excelled in planning but could not implement the programs that had impressed most Asian countries since 1970.

The Philippines' neighbors instead benefited from the country's own programs and technical researches.

Like most Asian countries, it is wading through simultaneous crises involving escalating oil prices. But compared to Singapore, Thailand and Malaysia, the Philippines has failed to match these nations' slow but incremental rise since 1970, Nebres said.

He cited startling differences between how Manila and Bangkok tackled their massive traffic problems.

Bangkok's traffic crisis was worse than Metro Manila's back in 1994. In only 10 years, however, Bangkok's traffic had eased due to the construction of massive skyways that link Thailand's capital city to the countryside, and the expansion of a light rail mass transport system which reduced vehicular traffic, he said.

Manila, meanwhile, endures its traffic jams with only a single network light rail transit system and a single skyway, which Bangkok had adapted.

Nebres said that Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore have been baffled by the fact that the Philippines had not implemented the same plans to the letter, while their own economies improved year after year.

"The big difference was our quality of leadership," Nebres said, "because the Philippines could not elect a Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore, a Mahathir (Mohamad) of Malaysia or the King and Queen of Thailand, who have been (that country's) stable leadership despite the changes in their government."

He noted that many Filipino leaders "regard execution (of plans) as a detail that is beneath the dignity of a business leader."

"*Ang problema sa Pilipinas, nasanay ang* leadership *na may inuutusan* (The problem in the Philippines is that its leadership had gotten used to delegating). Some leaders are [scared of] getting their hands dirty," Nebres said, adding: "That is precisely what they need to do. Get their hands dirty."

What has been worse for Philippine bureaucracy is that its leaders never led in the planning process.

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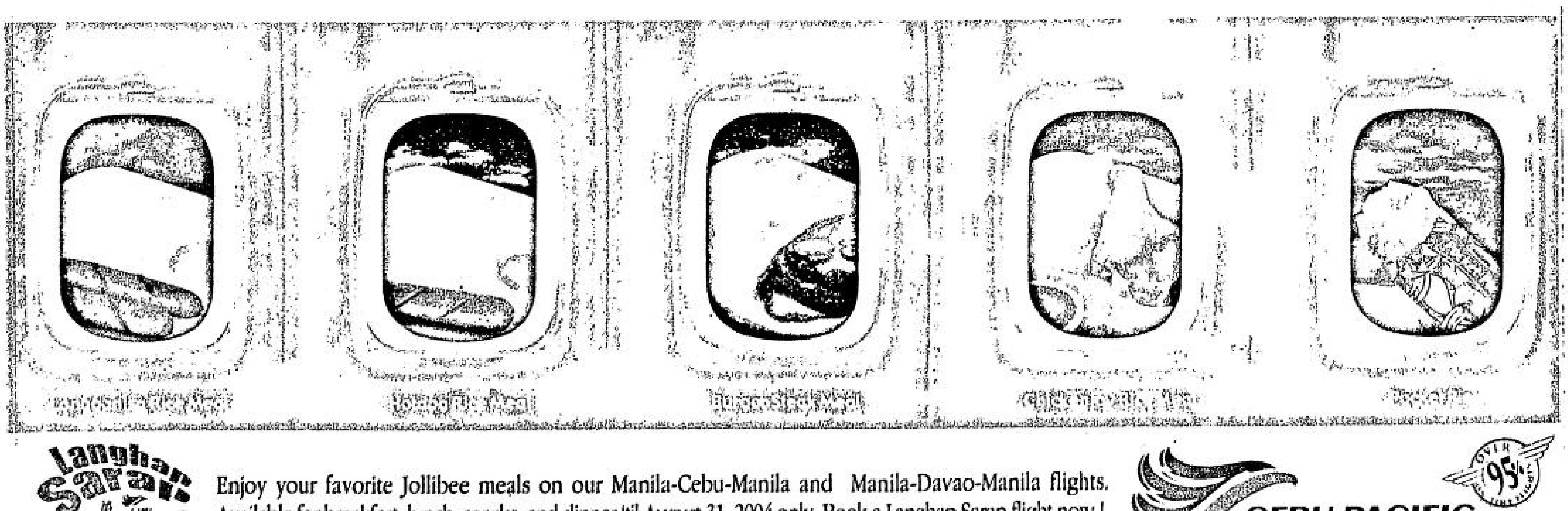

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DOJ to seek Rod Strunk's return from US anew

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE DEPARTMENT of Justice will seek once again to have Rod Lauren Strunk, the principal suspect in the killing of his wife, actress Nida Blanca, extradited from the United States.

Acting Justice Secretary Ma. Merceditas Gutierrez said the DOJ is set to refile its extradition petition against Strunk in three weeks after it gathered new evidence and interviewed new witnesses in the case.

"There are significant developments and very soon, we will file the petition for extradition," Gutierrez said.

The DOJ's original petition for Strunk's extradition was dismissed in November last year by California Judge Gregory Hollows who cited "conflicting and inconsistent evidence" submitted by Philippine government lawyers.

Gutierrez said the new evidence would address the concerns raised by Hollows when he junked the first petition.

"We will be able to address all the concerns that were raised. That is the reason it took us time to refile the petition," Gutierrez said.

She declined to reveal the new evidence and the identities of the new witnesses, however, saying the DOJ would provide details once the new extradition petition was filed.

She also downplayed concerns that Strunk may have already made good his escape following Hollows' dismissal of the DOJ's first extradition petition.

"We know he is still in the United States," Gutierrez said.

She said the decision to refile the petition was reached after DOJ officials met last week with Harriet Demetriou, the lawyer of Kaye Torres, Blanca's daughter.

Strunk left the country on Jan. 21, 2002, to visit his ailing mother in California, promising to return to face investigation in the death of his wife.

He has been charged with Blanca's murder in the Pasig City Regional Trial Court but he refused to return to the Philippines, saying he would not get a fair trial in the country.

RP Navy rescues Malaysian fishers, then arrests them

ZAMBOANGA—The Philippine Navy rescued seven Malaysian fishermen after their vessel sank in rough seas, and then arrested them for poaching, a navy spokesman said Tuesday.

A navy anti-terrorist patrol near the maritime border between the Philippines and Malaysia saw four foreign trawlers fishing illegally on the Filipino side over the weekend, Capt. Feliciano Angue said.

Three of the trawlers were detained without incident along with their crew of 11 Indonesians and three Malaysians. But the fourth trawler began sinking in the rough seas.

The navy rescued the seven Malaysian crewmen and then placed them under arrest, Angue told reporters.

The 21 fishermen were transferred to the Tawi-Tawi island group where they will face charges of illegal fishing. *AFP*

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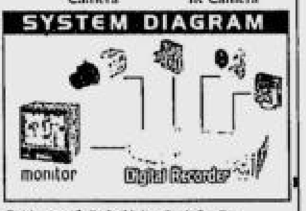

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When first ladies were First Ladies

From page A1

dy with a quiet steadfastness. And when he died suddenly in 1957, she gracefully exited from the limelight, turning her back on pleas for involvement in immediately succeeding elections, including suggestions to run for the presidency herself.

That was a time when first ladies were First Ladies.

Mrs. Magsaysay, widow of the beloved President Ramon Magsaysay, "Man of the Masses," passed away at 5 p.m. yesterday. She turned 89 on July 25.

Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. said his mother had been bedridden for several months. Two weeks ago, he said, she was operated on for lymphoma of the stomach at St. Luke's Medical Center.

"We knew [the surgery] was a long shot," the senator told the INQUIRER.

Mrs. Magsaysay left behind—aside from the senator, his sister Mila Valenzuela (eldest daughter Teresita died in 1979) and six grandchildren—a whole generation of admirers who also remembered her as one of the loveliest, and possibly the shyest, of presidential wives.

In her first year in Malacañang, she promptly developed allergies, supposedly triggered by the dust in the drapery.

Widowed at 41 when her husband perished in a plane crash, she moved out of the Palace and stayed with friends until benefactors built a house for her and her young family at Wack Wack in Mandaluyong in 1958.

"My mother never moved to any other house," Senator Magsaysay said.

The reclusive ex-first lady came out in public only to campaign for her son in 1998.

Twenty years earlier, she recounted in the Sunday Inquirer Magazine in 1996, politicians and friends had asked her: "Why don't you run for President? *Sabi ko*, wow. I didn't even want RM to run for reelection. I wanted my privacy."

She said RM loved mingling with the people during campaign season, while she preferred to look after their children. "I'm not well-versed in politics, the big things. Those were RM's. I'm only for the less important matters," she said.

In any case, she became active in many socio-civic programs, especially with the Philippine National Red Cross.

Convent girl

She was a convent girl on vacation when the burly Ramon Magsaysay, a car enthusiast, saw her in her father's garage in Zambales. "I thought he was too old for me," she told the SIM. "I thought he was interested in my older sister."

She ignored him.

"I was 17 and he was 25," Luz recalled. Ramon persisted. "I thought I was just going to marry him, then I could go back to school."

Luz was barely in her 20s when she gave birth to Teresita. Mila would come two years later, and then Ramon Jr.

When war broke out, Ramon left his family to join the guerrilla forces in Western Luzon. He was later appointed military governor. In 1946, Ramon ran for a congressional seat in Zambales, upon the prodding of the guerillas.

His wife was distraught. "My father was a politician, a municipal president, and I had heard stories about politicians and how their families broke up because of other women."

Even so, Ramon became congressman, and then President Elpidio Quirino handpicked him to become secretary of national defense. In 1953, he became president.

Life after Ramon was not easy, Luz said. He was never completely hers. But she would later say she was content with her memories.

After her son Ramon Jr. took his oath as a senator in 1995, Luz was asked: Did she see herself as First Mother?

Her reply: "I told Jun to serve his term well and then retire. One president in the family is enough."

Mrs. Magsaysay's remains lie at the National Shrine of the Divine Child, La Salle Greenhills, Mandaluyong City. She will be buried beside her husband. Interment is set on Saturday at the North Cemetery, Manila, after Mass at 9 a.m. *With PDI Research*

MRS. Magsaysay poses in front of a portrait of her late husband President Ramon Magsaysay.

PHOTO BY MANDY NAVASERO

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Prosecutor dismisses . . .

From page A1

lice "failed to establish probable cause against the respondents."

Loopholes in investigation

The prosecutor, in her resolution, found several inadequacies in the police investigation.

The police had submitted the statements of two witnesses, both employees of Saisaki Restaurant, to the prosecutor's office. But Dimaguila said the investigators failed to follow up the leads given by the witnesses.

In their investigation, the police had concluded that the Yaps and the Jaworskis arrived at Florida Street at around 8 p.m., met in the middle of the street, and exchanged gunfire.

The police, however, maintained they could not determine exactly who had fired the shots, and which camp had fired first.

'Much to be desired'

"The above conclusion of the PNP investigators regrettably does not appear to conform with the evidence on hand, particularly those coming from their informants, who were at the site when the shooting incidents happened," the prosecutor's resolution said.

"Neither (witness) pointed to anyone of the respondents as party to the shooting incidents," the resolution added.

The resolution said, at one point, referring to the investigation: "As it is, still much remain[s] to be desired."

Ryan Jaworski was the only one wounded in the shoot-out. He suffered gunshot wounds in both legs and was injured in the eye by a shard of glass.

Senior Supt. Ericson Velasquez, Mandaluyong city police chief, declined yesterday to comment on the dismissal of the case.

"I have yet to read the resolution. I can't comment now," he said.

Sealed lips

During the investigation in June, Velasquez told the INQUIRER that both the Jaworskis and the Yaps had not fully cooperated with the police, hampering their efforts to dig deeper into the case.

Police denied they were treating cases of rich and poor people differently. They said they could not do much in the Greenhills shoot-out because none of the parties believed involved had filed charges against each other.

The resolution said valet parker Nicolas Franco had testified seeing four vehicles arrive in the area—a red Honda CRV, a red Toyota Corolla with plate No. ULR-223, an owner-type jeep and a Nissan Patrol.

Police said the Nissan Patrol belonged to the Jaworskis, while the Honda CRV belonged to the Yaps.

Conflicting versions

But Franco did not witness the actual shooting because he was then returning to his post at the entrance of the restaurant, the resolution said.

"He, however, alleged that according to Gerry Recto (parking attendant), the protagonists in the exchange of gunfire were the passengers of the red Toyota Corolla and the passengers of the owner-type jeepney.

"This lead, however, was not followed up by the investigators with Gerry Recto," Dimaguila said.

According to the police:

POLICE who investigated the June 21 shoot-out between the scions of the Jaworski and Yap families in Greenhills established the following:

- The two groups arrived at Florida Street in East Greenhills armed.
- Their vehicles sustained bullet holes. The Jaworskis' Nissan Patrol took the heavier fire. It had nine bullet holes, two of which were "exit holes." The Yaps' Honda CRV sustained five bullet holes.

An exit hole could either mean somebody had fired from inside the vehicle, or somebody had fired from outside and the bullet went clear through the vehicle.

- Elton Yap had the incident blottered at the San Juan police station, before his group went to the Mandaluyong police.
- Each side insisted it was unarmed. Police could not establish who had actually fired guns. None of the witnesses could identify who shot who, police said.

The INQUIRER obtained a copy of the police report, written by SPO2 Pablo Rojas and PO1 Hector Aspa.

- The report quoted a witness as saying that he first noticed a red Honda CRV arrive, followed by two other "backup" vehicles.
- Not long after, a Toyota Corolla with plate No. ULR-223 parked at the back of the CLMC Building near the Saisaki Restaurant. Its three to four occupants remained inside. Two more vehicles carrying presumed companions of the occupants of the Toyota Corolla arrived.
- "Their group met the other group in the middle of the street but no conversation was heard," the report said. Suddenly, someone shouted, "*Tang ina mo ah* (Son of a bitch)."
- "The said words (seemed) to serve as a command as successive shots were fired," the report said.
- The shoot-out reportedly lasted 10 minutes and 82 spent shells were found. *Luige del Puerto*

RP ad firms shine in New York

By Celine Madamba
AVP for Strategic Marketing Communication

AFTER a surprisingly favorable performance at the Cannes International Advertising Festival, the Philippines did even better at the recently concluded New York Festivals (NYF) international competition in design, print and outdoor advertising by winning gold, silver and bronze medals.

Founded in 1957, the NYF oversees five other international awards competitions: film & video; television programming and promotions; radio programming and promotions; television and radio advertising, and interactive media. Entries to each of these competitions are judged in the United States and around the world by panels of peers in their respective industries. To date, the NYF has representation in 62 countries.

Entries from three local agencies, namely, TBWA-Santiago, Mangada and Puno, DDB Philippines and Jimenez-Basic, stood out from 44 other Philippine entries and some 20,000 entries from 95 countries.

TBWA-Santiago, Mangada and Puno bagged the major awards in three categories: Adidas "Bandage" won the country's first gold world medal; Shangri-La Hotel's "Eggs" won a silver world medal; "Ultrasound" website banner and the Adidas "Anti-Fake series" outdoor and poster entries each won a bronze world medal.

The "Adidas" series, which was a finalist in Cannes as well as the Asia Adfest in Thailand and the Media Advertising Awards in Hong Kong, was created by TBWA's executive creative director Melvin Mangada, creative director Joey Campillo and art director Evans Sator.

DDB Philippines won a bronze world medal for the second straight year for its "Stamp" print work for family and women's rights advocate Teodora. It was created by executive creative director/copywriter Roger Pe, art director Manny de Paz and visualizer Noah Valdez. "Stamp" was also the Creative Guild's Diwa Ad of the Month for August last year and was a bronze winner in the Diwa Ad of the Year competition in May.

Winning the country's fourth bronze world medal was Jimenez-Basic's "Earchart" for Avid Marketing created by executive creative director Don Sevilla III, copywriter Noel San Juan and art director Randy Tiempo. The agency had earlier entered the elite circle of Clio and Cannes finalists this year for its "Beauty Pageant" television ad for Bench Response.

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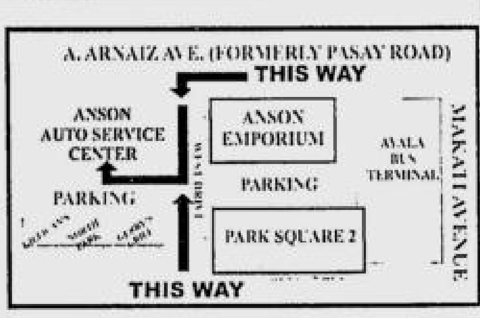
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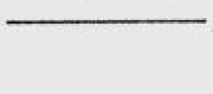

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Bush reorganizes US forces abroad

Withdrawal to bring 70,000 troops home

WASHINGTON—Two US Army divisions will leave Cold War-era bases in Germany over the next decade, and the US military will increase it presence in former Warsaw Pact countries under President George W. Bush's reorganization of forces abroad.

Bush announced the plan on Monday and said the realignment ultimately would bring up to 70,000 troops—plus about 100,000 family members and civilian workers—back to the United States. Major shifts would not begin before 2006.

More than 200,000 US troops are now stationed overseas, most of them in Europe.

Pentagon officials said the realignment also would close scores of US installations in Europe to consolidate forces at larger bases there. At the same time, the United States would make greater use of training and logistics bases on the soil of new allies like Uzbekistan, Poland and Romania, said three top Pentagon officials who briefed reporters on condition of anonymity.

The moves are meant to provide greater flexibility and quicker reaction to deal with the smaller engagements that Pentagon planners foresee during the war on terrorism and beyond. And they will move some troops closer to the Middle East and Central Asia.

On a visit to Washington last month, Romanian Prime Minister Adrian Nastase said he had offered Bush "a five-star location for military bases." Romania, which joined Nato this year, has airstrips and naval bases on the Black Sea, such as one at Constanta, Romania, within striking distance of Iraq and Central Asia.

Democratic critics said Bush's plan would place more troops further from potential battlefields and wear out soldiers with more frequent training overseas, away from families.

Retired Gen. Wesley Clark, a former Democratic presidential candidate, said Bush's plan "will significantly undermine US national security."

In Germany, the two heavy armored divisions will be replaced with one brigade, a unit roughly one-third the size of a division's 15,000 troops. Instead of tanks, the replacement unit will be outfitted with new Stryker vehicles, the smaller, lighter and faster armored vehicles that are part of the Army's future strategy.

The United States has had about 1,000 soldiers in Uzbekistan since the war in neighboring Afghanistan that followed the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks. It has no soldiers permanently based in Poland and Romania although it conducts training with those countries.

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld and other administration officials have frequently discussed the realignment with allies. Rumsfeld, who proposed the changes before the 2001 terrorist attacks, reassured Kremlin officials over the weekend in Russia that the US moves into former Soviet and Warsaw Pact territory are not a threat to Moscow.

The changes would not directly affect the 150,000 troops involved in or supporting wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Both divisions based in Germany have seen action in Iraq, where the US military presence increasingly relies on National Guard and Reserve forces.

Underscoring the delicate balance of military needs and diplomatic maneuvering, Bush administration officials offered few details of the realignment plans Monday—and did so only on condition of anonymity. They said any major shifts would not begin until at least 2006 and possibly later.

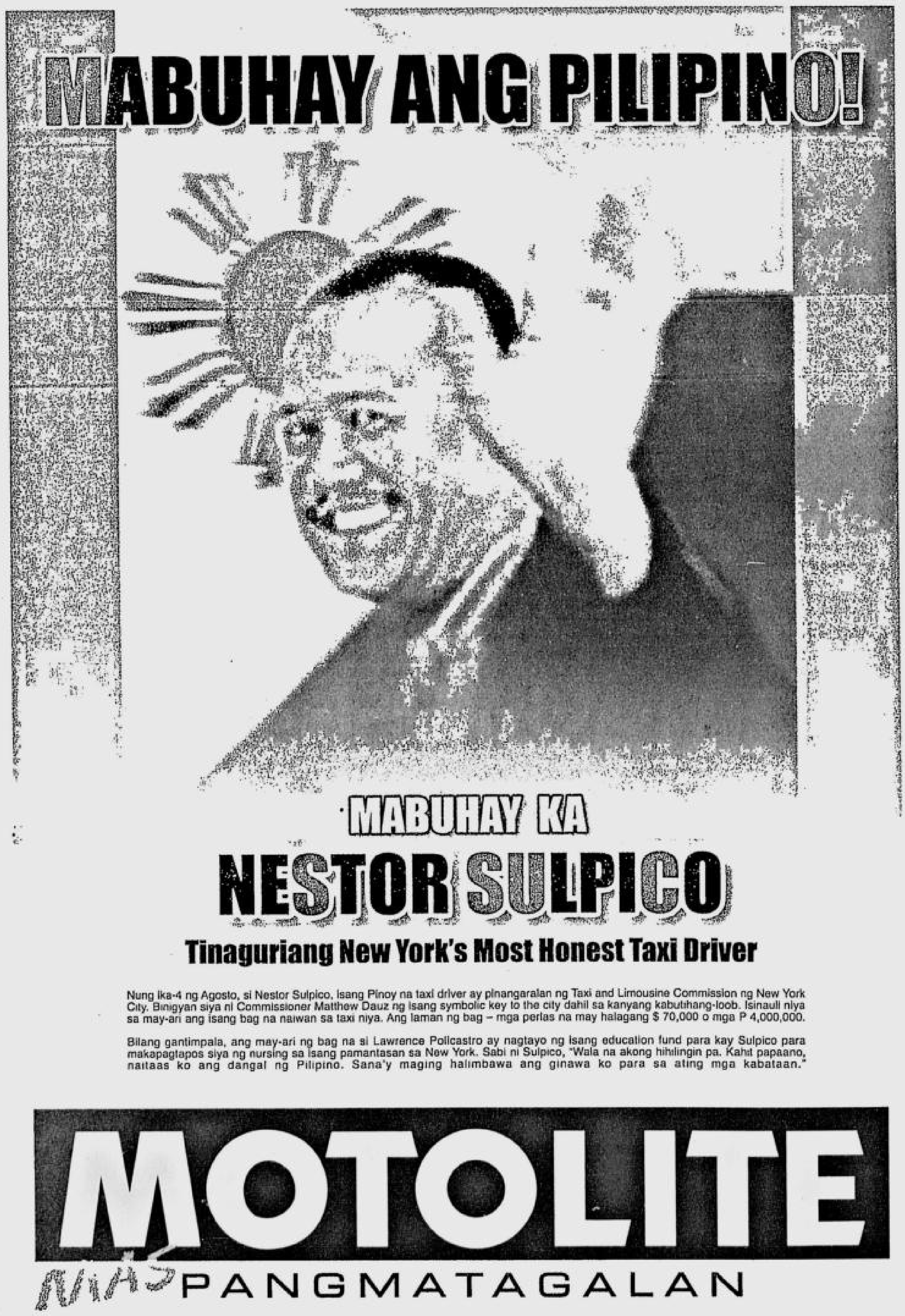
Pentagon spokesperson Bryan Whitman said the three defense department officials and one state department official who briefed dozens of reporters at a Pentagon news conference had to remain anonymous. The officials involved are all closely involved in the planning and negotiating involved.

The officials said the United States planned no new, major overseas bases. Poland has offered several bases for training, and US officials are talking with Turkish officials about using the Incirlik air base, which was home to allied planes patrolling the former "no-fly zone" over northern Iraq.

The US officials refused to discuss plans for troop shifts in Asia. US and South Korean officials previously said about one-third of the 37,000 American forces in South Korea would soon leave.

The United States and Japan are discussing possible changes for the more than 40,000 troops in Japan, but the officials would not say whether that involved increasing or decreasing the number. *AP*

USA Freedom Corps representative Alexandra Amend, 10, shows US President George W. Bush a bag bearing his image in Cincinnati, Ohio, on Aug. 16. Bush later called for the gradual withdrawal of about 70,000 troops from Europe and Asia, but no immediate relief for troops in Iraq, in one of biggest post-Cold War realignments of US military forces abroad. REUTERS



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NESTOR SULPICO

Tinaguriang New York's Most Honest Taxi Driver

Nung ika-4 ng Agosto, si Nestor Sulpico, isang Pinoy na taxi driver ay pinangaralan ng Taxi and Limousine Commission ng New York City. Binigyan siya ni Commissioner Matthew Dauz ng isang symbolic key to the city dahil sa kanyang kabutihang-loob. Isinauli niya sa may-ari ang isang bag na naiwan sa taxi niya. Ang laman ng bag – mga perlas na may halagang $ 70,000 o mga P 4,000,000.

Bilang gantimpala, ang may-ari ng bag na si Lawrence Policastro ay nagtayo ng isang education fund para kay Sulpico para makapagtapos siya ng nursing sa isang pamantasan sa New York. Sabi ni Sulpico, "Wala na akong hihilingin pa. Kahit papaano, naitaas ko ang dangal ng Pilipino. Sana'y maging halimbawa ang ginawa ko para sa ating mga kabataan."

MOTOLITE

MAS PANGMATAGALAN

Delays mar talks to end Najaf fighting

BAGHDAD—A delegation of Iraqis meant to help negotiate an end to the uprising in Najaf was forced Tuesday to delay its mission to the holy city when it could not get a military escort for the dangerous journey.

The 60 mediators from Iraq's National Conference had planned to leave early Tuesday morning to meet radical Shiite cleric Moqtada Sadr and appeal to his followers to put down their arms and join Iraq's political process. However, by early afternoon, they still remained at the conference site in central Baghdad.

"The US troops and Iraqi police refused to escort the delegation, they are afraid for its safety because they themselves are being targeted by militants," said delegate Ahmad al Hayali.

The interior ministry said it had received no request to provide security for the delegation.

"We are prepared to provide all kinds of protection to the delegation from Baghdad to Najaf and back," interior ministry spokesperson Sabah Kadhim said.

As the delegation waited, a mortar round hit a busy street several kilometers away, killing six people and injuring 35 others, officials said.

The blast on al-Rasheed Street set one building on fire and damaged seven cars, said Col. Adnan Abdul-Rahman, of the interior ministry.

It smashed the front of a barbershop, and blood mixed with shards of glass on the street. Firefighters were hosing charred cars, their windshields smashed.

The conference itself was considered a major target for militants waging a 16-month-old insurgency in the country, and an explosion, reportedly from a mortar, shook the area near the building Tuesday.

Sadr aide Ali al-Yassiry, who said he came to the conference to talk to UN officials about the Najaf violence, said he was slightly injured in the blast.

Sadr's followers have said they were boycotting the gathering, though several members of his movement have been seen there in recent days.

Explosions and gunfire shook the streets of Najaf on Tuesday as the clashes escalated. US troops entered the flashpoint Old City neighborhood, where Sadr's Mahdi Army militia was based, and US tanks encircled the Old City.

The militants have been battling US troops from Najaf's vast cemetery and revered Imam Ali Shrine since Aug. 5, when a two-month-old ceasefire broke down. *AP*

Moore turns up heat on Bush with DVD debut

LOS ANGELES—President George W. Bush will face a home-video barrage four weeks before the election: "Fahrenheit 9/11," Michael Moore's assault on Bush's handling of the Sept. 11 attacks, debuts on DVD and videotape Oct. 5.

The announcement on Monday confirmed Moore's initial intention to have the film out shortly before Election Day, a time frame the director favored since May's Cannes Film Festival, where "Fahrenheit 9/11" won the top honor.

After the movie debuted to record box-office numbers for a documentary, distributor Lions Gate had indicated the movie might continue playing theatrically through the end of the year, potentially delaying the home-video release.

The film has grossed $115 million domestically, the first documentary ever to top the $100 million mark.

Sony's Columbia TriStar home entertainment unit will release "Fahrenheit 9/11" on DVD and videotape.

Among DVD extras will be a featurette examining the release of "Fahrenheit 9/11," which lost its theatrical distributor last spring after Disney refused to let subsidiary Miramax handle the film because of its political content. Miramax bosses Harvey and Bob Weinstein bought back the film and lined up distribution through Lions Gate and IFC Films.

Also featured on the DVD will be:

- Deleted footage that includes a scene outside Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, where seven US soldiers have been charged with abusing Iraqi prisoners.
- Coverage of Lila Lipscomb—the mother of a US soldier killed in Iraq, who was featured prominently in "Fahrenheit 9/11"—at the film's premiere in Washington.
- An examination of the acts and experiences of Arab-American comedians after the Sept. 11 attacks.

AP

COURTNEY Love arrives at Beverly Hills Municipal Court for arraignment for a felony assault with a deadly weapon charge and also a pre-trial hearing in a separate felony drug possession charge on Aug. 16 in Beverly Hills, California. AFP

Celebrity dramas play out in US courtrooms

NEW YORK—The King of Pop, complete with golden armband, returned to court in the child-molestation case against him as supporters cheered. Courtney Love received a date for her trial on drug charges. Prosecutors lost a key appeal in the rape case against basketball star Kobe Bryant.

That wasn't all. A woman accused of stalking Catherine Zeta-Jones was ruled fit to stand trial. And Alexis Hornbuckle, 18, the Women's Basketball Association national Player of the Year, agreed to 50 hours of community service in West Virginia after being cited for shoplifting.

It all happened Monday in America on a national court docket brimming with star wattage even more than usual—cases against, and involving, the famous.

A burst of celebrities gone bad? Probably not. More likely, entertainment-industry watchers and legal experts say, it's a media-age sign of the times—and not surprising for a land where millions sit riveted to a show called "Celebrity Justice."

"The fact that... a half-hour show could be derived from this single subject not only tells you the state of things but the level of interest," said film critic Leonard Maltin.

Americans watching celebrities rise and fall isn't new. They follow vaunted marriages that end in nasty divorces, high-paying careers that crash and burn, and the trudge of celebrities in and out of court for sundry infractions—from Glen Campbell (drunken driving) to Winona Ryder (shoplifting).

"There is a real delight to seeing celebrities falter," said psychologist Dr. Joyce Brothers. "There is a really warm, embarrassing side that you're thankful it's not you."

Part of it, she said, is simply the natural extension of celebrity-watching.

"They are all going through our worst nightmares, the worst things you can think of," she said Monday. "There's a part of us that says 'See, they have money and look at them.'"

Brothers says the days of the American glitterati getting away with things—or having their more questionable doings swept under the rug by police and a complicit press—are gone: "Being a celebrity doesn't excuse you."

Decades ago, people were fascinated with a paternity suit against Charlie Chaplin and the murder trial of Roscoe "Fatty" Arbuckle, one of Hollywood's highest-paid actors until he was charged in 1921 with killing actress Virginia Rappe. Though Arbuckle was unanimously acquitted, his acting career was ruined—but not before an appetite for the legal peccadilloes of celebrities took root. *AP*

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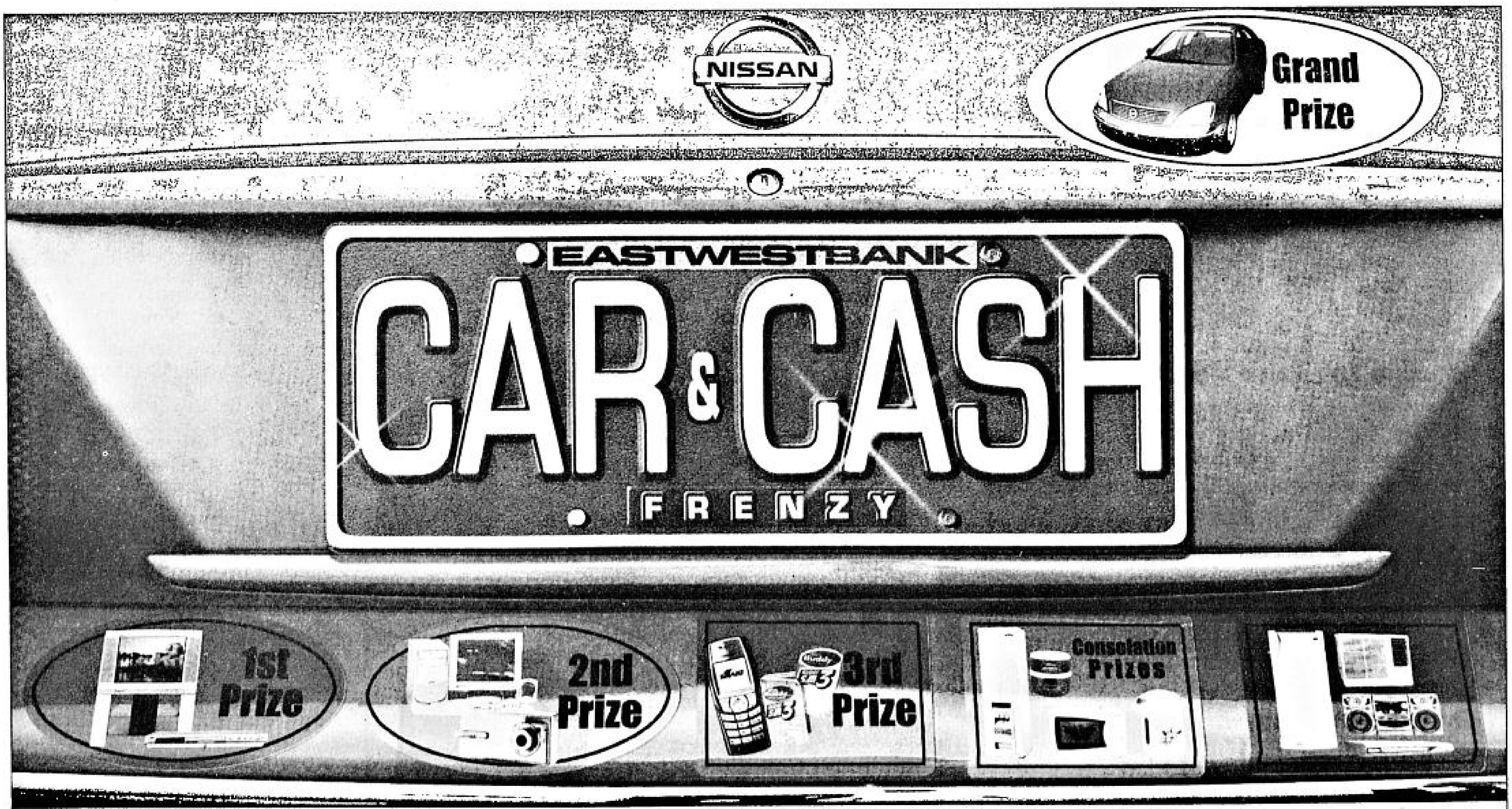

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Chavez foes divided following recall defeat

CARACAS—Venezuela's opposition will have a tough time recovering after failing to oust President Hugo Chavez in a recall vote, a setback that quickly spurred infighting among the president's foes.

For opposition leaders, the defeat was an agonizing remainder of their past failures to oust Chavez.

Venezuelans are torn between those who accuse Chavez of trying to impose a Cuban-style communist regime and those who say he has given the poor majority a voice in politics and greater access to health and education.

The opposition disagreed Monday on how to react following the devastating defeat, but they all flatly refused to acknowledge the president's triumph at the polls.

Chavez foes alleged wide-spread fraud in Sunday's referendum even though former US President Jimmy Carter and the Organization of American States endorsed the results.

Chavez won with 58 percent of the vote.

"The political leadership has not been in line with the people," said Antonio Ledezma, who urged opposition sympathizers to stage street protests.

Despite an economic recession, rising crime rates and 15 percent unemployment, Chavez won widespread support among Venezuela's poor majority by spending millions of dollars to teach adults to read, sending Cuban doctors to slums and offering loans to farmers and small businesses.

Critics say the programs, many inspired by Cuban models, are a way of spreading communist propaganda to the poor.

The opposition—splintered into small parties with contrasting ideologies—never came up with a clear plan for running Venezuela or even a candidate to succeed Chavez.

Chavez, whose six-year term ends in January 2007, has now gained momentum ahead of September regional elections and 2005 congressional elections. His allies already control the National Assembly and most state governments. *AP*

TANGO WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP
Japanese dancers Yoichi Araki (left) and Megumi Abe, winners of the "Tango Scenario 2004" tournament in Tokyo, simulate a tango figure on Aug. 16 in Buenos Aires. From Aug. 14-22, 325 couples, among them 58 from foreign countries, will participate in the II Tango Dance World Championship which will take place in the Argentine capital. AFP

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Pro-democracy bet arrested in China

HONG KONG—A pro-democracy candidate for Hong Kong's legislature was arrested in mainland China for allegedly having sex with a prostitute and will be held for six months ahead of a key legislative election, a party colleague said Tuesday.

Another party colleague suggested that Ho Wai-to's arrest on Friday was aimed at spoiling his chances in the Sept. 12 legislative elections, expected to show a surge in support for pro-democracy lawmakers at the expense of the Beijing government's local allies.

China considers pro-democracy lawmakers in its Hong Kong territory to be troublemakers because of their harsh criticism of the Chinese government, and Beijing has banned many of them from the mainland. A former British colony, Hong Kong returned to Chinese rule in 1997.

Ho was arrested in a hotel room while on a business trip in the city of Dongguan in the mainland Chinese province of Guangdong, said fellow Democratic Party member James To, citing information provided by Ho's wife, who has met with her husband.

He maintains his innocence, To said, and alleges that he signed a confession after being beaten and deprived of food and water.

Ho claims mainland police framed him by planting condoms in his bed and then bringing a prostitute to his room, To said. He has been ordered detained for six months of reform education, To added. *AP*

Typhoon death toll in China reaches 164

SHANGHAI, China—Typhoon "Rananim's" death toll in eastern China rose to 164 on Tuesday, with another 24 people missing, many in landslides sparked by the most powerful storm to hit the country in 46 years.

The missing included 18 people feared stuck beneath mud and rock in the mountainous outskirts of Yueqing city in Zhejiang province, where 29 people have already been confirmed dead, the government's China Central Television reported.

With power and transport links cut, villagers have been digging through rocks and mud with their hands and farm tools.

Rananim ground into central Zhejiang, about 150 km south of Shanghai on Thursday evening, causing an estimated 16.4 billion yuan ($2 billion) in economic losses.

Of those killed, 109 died when houses collapsed, while 55 were lost in floods and landslides or carried away by the raging winds, the official Xinhua News Agency reported, quoting an unidentified local government spokesperson.

Xinhua said the typhoon affected 13 million people altogether, toppling 64,300 houses, destroying crops, roads and fishing farms, and killing 55,000 head of livestock. No figures were given for those left homeless.

Rananim also injured at least 1,800 people, 185 of them seriously, and officials have expressed concern over the spread of diseases aided by daytime temperatures of 37 degrees Celsius. *AP*

Anwar's final appeal

KUALA LUMPUR—Malaysia's highest court will deliver a verdict next week on jailed politician Anwar Ibrahim's final appeal against a conviction and nine-year prison sentence for sodomy, officials said Tuesday.

But Anwar, the former deputy prime minister, has said that he has lost faith in the judicial system and expects the Federal Court to reject his appeal on Aug. 28, his lawyer Sankara Nair said.

Anwar is serving prison terms totaling 15 years after being convicted at two separate trials of corruption and sodomy. He alleges the charges were fabricated to crush anti-government protests and a leadership challenge he mounted against then-Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad.

Mahathir fired Anwar as his deputy in 1998 after they had a policy dispute during the Asian financial crisis. Mahathir retired last October after 22 years as prime minister. He denies conspiring in Anwar's downfall.

A Federal Court official confirmed the new date for the verdict on the appeal, which had been scheduled for last month but was later postponed. *AP*

Hurricane wreaks havoc on Florida heartland

WAUCHULA, Florida—Hurricane "Charley" lifted Jay Clark's 3-ton cattle feeder and dumped it a half mile away. It flattened greenhouses belonging to brothers Wayne and Colon Lambert. A packing house for strawberries and watermelon was reduced to a metal skeleton.

The hurricane's northeastern route tore through an agricultural swath of Florida—known as the Sunshine State—that you won't likely see in glossy travel brochures. It's a world removed from the Art Deco hotels of Miami Beach, the manicured golf communities along the Gulf Coast and the manufactured fantasies of Disney World and Orlando's other theme parks.

The route is located in Florida's heartland—the state's equivalent to the American Midwest. Instead of being the nation's breadbasket, it's the country's orange juice jug. More than a third of the orange juice produced in Florida comes from fruit in the counties through which Hurricane Charley passed.

"This is the heart of Florida agriculture. It bore the brunt of the storm," said Congressman Adam Putnam, whose district used to include the area hit by the storm.

The storm on Friday roughly followed the path of Highway 17 from Punta Gorda on the Gulf Coast, the hardest hit area, to Fort Meade, before tearing through Polk County to Orlando and Daytona Beach.

The hurricane uprooted hundreds of orange trees along the highway, turned a gas station into dust, tossed power lines and poles across the road, blew the roofs off countless homes and fruit packinghouses and left Wauchula's Main Street in a bombed-out state of crumbled brick buildings and windowless shops. *AP*

Taiwan inspectors find drinks tainted

TAIPEI—Ice tea, orange juice and other cold drinks at fast-food outlets in Taiwan's capital—including the Japanese chain MOS Burger and America's KFC—contained high levels of bacteria that could cause cramps and diarrhea, officials said Tuesday.

The contamination was a sign that the drinks weren't properly refrigerated or were tainted by workers with poor hygiene, Taipei's government said in a report on its website.

The results were based on random inspections at 27 restaurants in July, the city said. The contaminated drinks contained coliform, a family of bacteria present in air, water and soil.

Inspectors found the most contaminated drinks at MOS Burger, where a total six, or 13 percent, of a total 48 samples of ice tea and ice coffee tested positive for the bacteria.

Thirty samples were taken at KFC and two of them—both in orange juice—tested positive, the city said.

US burger chain McDonald's was the cleanest, with all 143 samples passing the tests, the city said.

MOS Burger's Taiwan office said in a statement that it was surprised by the results and would send inspectors from Japan to help tighten quality control.

KFC's Taiwan office said it would strengthen worker training to resolve the problem.

The fast-food chains were asked to take those drinks off the counters. They were also fined up to NT$150,000 ($4,400), the city said. *AP*

Teacher pleads guilty to sex with teen stude

MELBOURNE—A 36-year-old gym teacher pleaded guilty to repeatedly having sex with a 15-year-old male student over a six-week period, a court heard Tuesday.

Karen Louise Ellis, a married mother-of-three, pleaded guilty in the Melbourne Magistrates Court to six counts of having sex with a child under her care. Each conviction carries a possible sentence of 15 years in prison.

Magistrate Dan Muling released Ellis on bail until she appears for sentencing in the Victoria state County Court on Nov. 4.

The physical education teacher told police she had unprotected sex with the student, who cannot be identified, at her Melbourne home while her husband was away on business.

Ellis said she "didn't even stop and think about age" when she first had sex with the boy in October last year, according to her police statement tendered to court.

"It's not like it's where I've just taken advantage of this child," she told police. "This isn't just about sex. He's not a little boy."

A police review of Ellis' cell phone records showed she sent the boy 499 SMS messages between Oct. 24 and Jan. 7 this year.

Ellis told police the pair first had sex on Oct. 10 when he asked to go back to her house after school. Both said they had sex another five times between Nov. 15 and 24, twice staying at her house overnight. *AP*

Cops in porn scandal

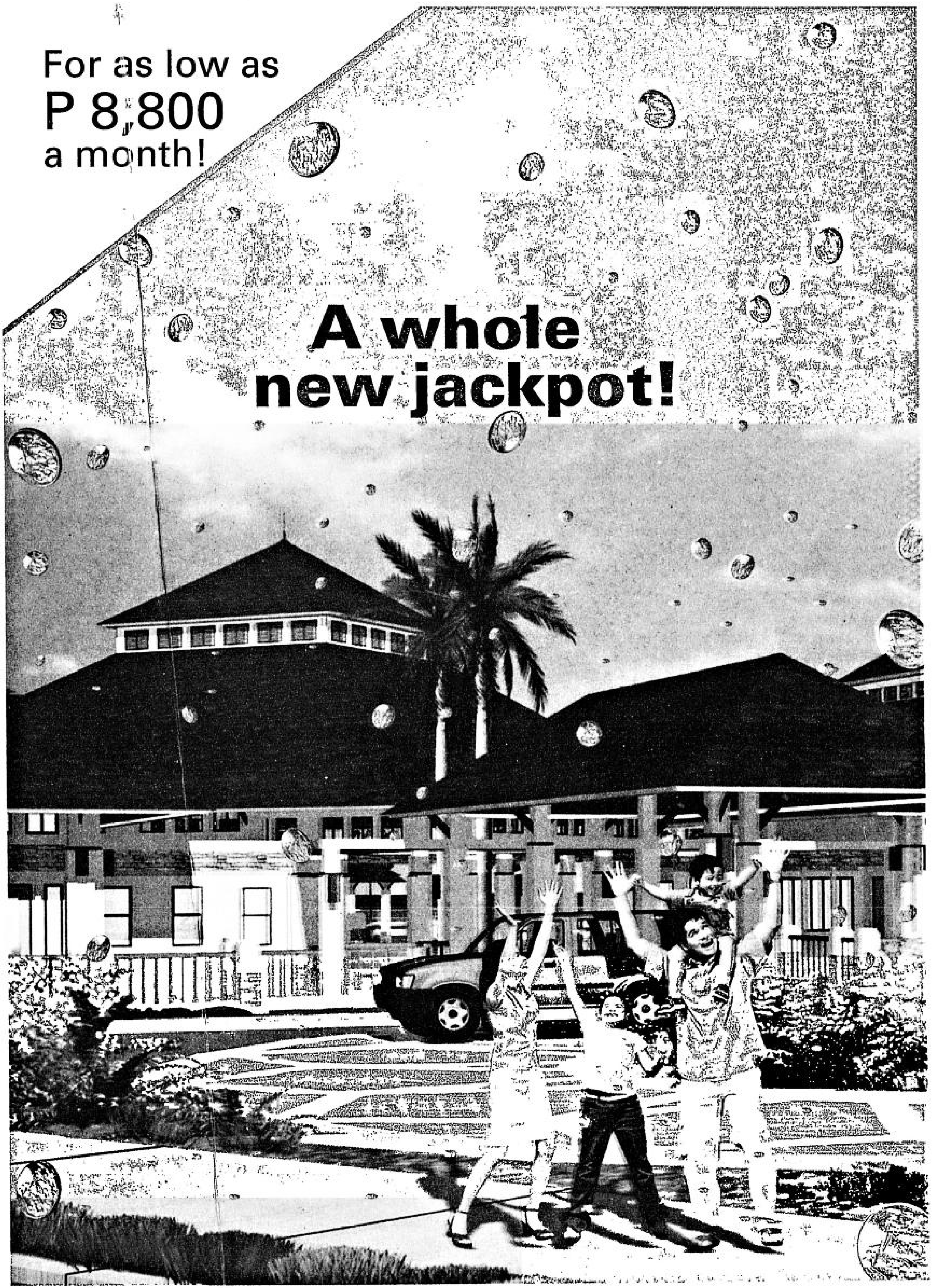
LONDON—Two British policemen have been suspended from duty after a newspaper reported they had been filmed enjoying the attentions of porn stars while they were supposed to be on patrol.

The News of the World reported Sunday that the two policemen, aged 30 and 34, had been called to calm down a crowd who spotted a pornographic movie being filmed in a street in London's Soho district.

But the officers talked their way into the film crew's van and allowed the two female stars to perform a sex act on them, while the crew secretly rolled the cameras, the paper said.

"I was just expecting them to want their photo taken with the girls or get an autograph," the paper quoted the film's director, Marino Franchi, as saying.

"It was unbelievable. They just decided to have their very own private porn movie while on the job." *Reuters*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First step

EDITORIAL

THE REPORT that the Moro Islamic Liberation Front has been cooperating, and even assisting, the government in cracking down on the Pentagon kidnap gang is most welcome. While some people may dismiss such reports as more propaganda than fact, it nevertheless points to the direction things should be going.

Kidnap gangs are not just the enemy of the state, they are the enemy of the people. They are the enemy of any ethnic or religious group whose reputation is tarnished by association with them. The MILF has long suffered from the prevalent belief that they are, if not actually aiding and abetting, then tolerating and coddling the Pentagon gang.

Going by the principles its leaders claim to espouse, the MILF should have no room for association with groups like the Pentagon gang. The participation, explicit or not, of the MILF in operations against kidnap gangs like the Pentagon should allow both Muslims and Christians, Mindanao folk, and people in the Visayas and Luzon, to look at the MILF in a more positive light.

The cooperation between the MILF and the Armed Forces of the Philippines that culminated in the bombardment of the alleged Pentagon camp in Liguasan Marsh is just one step. It is the first in many confidence-building measures that should take place for the MILF's idealistic credentials to be established and made credible. The MILF has against it a whole range of mistrustful institutions—beginning with the AFP—and sectors that will continue to view any MILF cooperation as insincere and mere opportunism.

This brings to the fore the real challenge that lies ahead for the MILF, as it attempts to strengthen and secure its position as a group representing the interests of Muslim Filipinos.

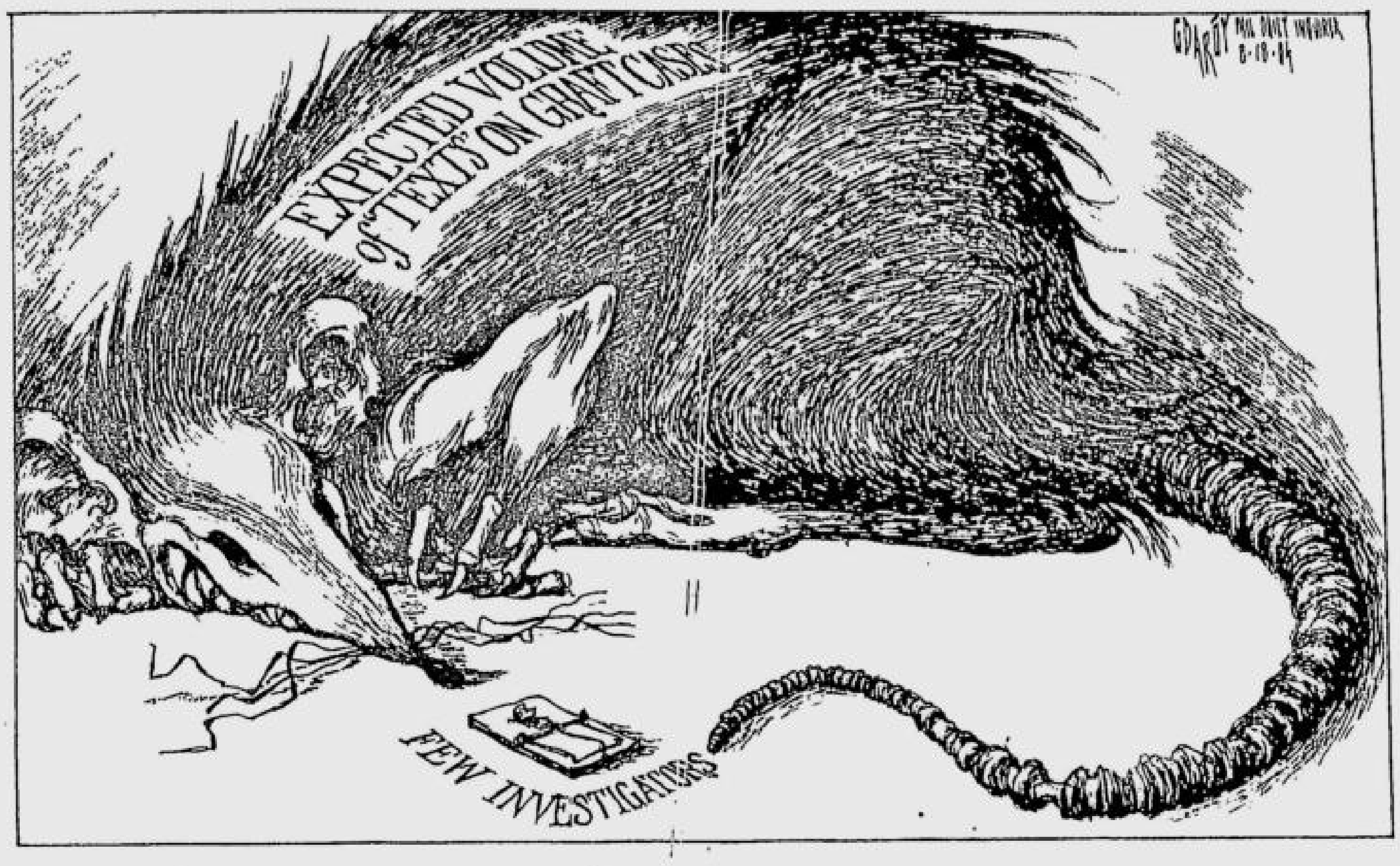
If doubts persist about the success of the joint operation that was supposed to have claimed the life of Pentagon leader Alonto Tahir, more so does the suspicion linger that the MILF continues to harbor and help international terrorists belonging to Jemaah Islamiyah.

It is a common belief among members of the AFP and the media, that the MILF, like the NPA, sees nothing wrong with resorting to pure banditry in order to fund its political operations. In fact, the suspicion that the MILF is actually behind groups like the Pentagon Gang is worse than criticisms leveled at the leftist groups that extort "revolutionary taxes," because at least the leftists dignify their plunder with political terminology. In contrast, in the eyes of many, the MILF simply disclaims knowledge for what its surrogates are actually doing.

To disabuse those who hew to this kind of thinking, which the MILF is the first to denounce as unfair, it must go further than cooperating with the government in hunting down bandit groups. It must confront the issue of terrorism in the name of Islam, specifically, its alleged links with Jemaah Islamiyah. While its leadership has denied such links, reports have come out every now and then from both local and foreign sources saying that the MILF has provided sanctuaries and training sites for the Southeast Asian terrorist organization.

The MILF must now speed up its efforts to rebuild its image by working to dismantle if not eliminate the presence of JI in our country. It must be seen to be working toward the elimination of the existing presence of JI and to keeping the country free of agents provocateurs and terrorists who intend to use the country as both their base and refuge. This can be done in many ways, including the sharing of intelligence, the quiet but firm withdrawal of logistical and moral support, and, hopefully, the active elimination of terrorist cells and camps.

To fail to do so would be to restrict the emerging relationship between the government and the MILF strictly to that of combatants searching for a truce. It would not improve the prospects for peace or a just settlement of the grievances of Muslim Filipinos. It would mean that the MILF is only after cosmetic public relations benefits, which does not, by any stretch of the imagination, leave any room for confidence building. It would mean that in reality the MILF is foursquare behind not just kidnapping for ransom but also the most ruthless and reprehensible kinds of terrorism.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High taxes may reduce, not increase, revenue

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

THE PHILIPPINE press is in an uproar over the spate of assassinations of journalists. It is not because they are afraid of writing 30 but because of the helplessness of police agencies in bringing the assassins to justice. Journalists have long accepted that premature death is an occupational hazard. In fact, it is more so for them than for soldiers, policemen and bomb disposal experts. Because more certain for them than death by bullets is death by reason of poverty.

It has been that way since the Philippines first began publishing newspapers. To cite one example, Marcelo H. del Pilar (pen name: Plaridel), hero, ilustrado, editor of La Solidaridad and among the earliest Filipino journalists, died at an early age a very poor man. Like the early writers, painters and composers, many journalists have died of hunger.

Aside from starvation, heart disease and high blood pressure end their lives early, for journalism is a high stress job. The journalist lives under constant pressure as he races with the daily deadline and worries constantly that he may have missed an important story or that a competitor may have scooped him.

Cirrhosis of the liver, emphysema and lung cancer are other life-shorteners for journalists because many of them are heavy drinkers and smokers. The reason is that nicotine drives their adrenaline while they write their stories. That is why desks in newsrooms are full of cigarette burns. Alcohol, on the other hand, relaxes them after deadline.

They are also heavy coffee drinkers, because caffeine is also a stimulant, but at least coffee, contrary to popular belief, is not harmful to health.

Which is the reason why Plaridel, the association of journalists, will mark the death (or birth) anniversary of Del Pilar, or Plaridel, on Aug. 30 with evening cocktails at (where else?) the Ilustrado restaurant in Intramuros. Manila Mayor Lito Atienza will be the special guest, since he has jurisdiction over M.H. del Pilar Street in the tourist belt. Journalists and friends are invited. Tickets are only P150 per person, a bargain in exchange for the scintillating company.

* * *

Speaking of poverty and hunger, isn't it ironic that the government is planning to impose more taxes at this time when poverty is like a plague overrunning our country? Isn't it downright stupid, uncaring and callous that the oil tax will be increased at a time when the price of crude oil is rising?

The government's contention that the new oil tax is "not exactly anti-poor" is insulting. It assumes that the people are stupid.

A higher oil tax will raise the prices of fuel, which will trigger a chain reaction that will also raise transportation and power rates and, therefore, practically everything else. Even the Supreme Court has raised court fees although these are not affected at all by oil prices. Unfortunately, while the poor don't have to pay the higher court fees, they still have to buy food whose prices are already rising.

* * *

Raising taxes at this time is shortsighted. The government sees only that it needs more money and therefore will get it from the people. But it does not see that in the long run, it would be counterproductive and would actually reduce tax revenue instead of increase it.

The government is already taking almost 21 percent of an average family's income in the form of direct and indirect taxes. If you take more by increasing taxes, people would have little money left to buy goods and services that factories and businesses manufacture and sell. Therefore, they would be able to sell less of these and would have less income. And therefore, they would pay less income taxes.

Some of them may even have to lay off employees. These jobless employees would be unable to buy goods and therefore businesses would be able to sell even less and have smaller incomes and pay less taxes. It would be another chain reaction.

Furthermore, the employees who lost their jobs would not have any income and therefore would not pay any income tax.

The so called "sin products"—cigarettes and liquor—are the favorite whipping boy of governments. When they need more taxes, the knee-jerk reaction is to raise excise taxes on tobacco and alcohol. The high prices will discourage people from smoking and drinking, which are bad for their health, governments say.

But if they do that, the cigarette and liquor companies would be able to sell less and therefore would pay less taxes. The government, therefore, would collect less taxes instead of more.

Worse, the high prices of the tax-paying domestic products would encourage smuggling. Because the smuggled products would be cheaper since they are not paying taxes; people would buy them instead of the local counterparts.

The government would be hit by a double whammy: it would collect less taxes from the domestic companies; and it would not be able to collect any tax from the smuggled cigarettes and liquor that the people are buying.

The usual remedy of other governments when their economies are depressed is to reduce taxes or have tax holidays. That is intended to leave the people more spending money. With more money in their hands, the people would buy more goods, the factories would produce more, sell more and pay more taxes.

Also they would hire more workers. And the more people are employed, the more income taxes they pay. With more income, they buy more and businesses expands and pay more taxes. Another chain reaction. The economy prospers.

That's what we should do.

Lopsided

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

JOHN Pilger, a multi-awarded journalist, filmmaker and playwright, wrote in his book, "Distant Voices," about the lopsided nature of global information dissemination, or indeed information-making, in this way:

On the day Robert Maxwell, the tycoon, died, the British media rushed to cover his death. They described in painstaking detail nearly all the aspects of his life, and death. His yacht was photographed from all angles, as was the bed he slept in and the goblets he quaffed wine from. Pictures of him in various poses, in shorts, in slacks, in formal wear, with the prime minister and with Elton John, were splashed on the front pages of newspapers and primetime TV.

At the same time this happened, some 6,000 men, women and children died in a typhoon in a country called the Philippines. Most of them died in a village in a town called Ormoc. Mudslide fell on the village, which nestled at the foot of a mountain, and swept it to the sea. The deaths of the 6,000 Filipinos ("the equivalent of the sudden extinction of a Welsh mining village") was mentioned only in passing in the British media. "On the BBC's Nine O'Clock News, Maxwell was the first item; the disaster in the Philippines was one of the last in a round-up of 'fillers.'"

I do know that this state of affairs was challenged repeatedly by a number of independent South initiatives which strove to give equal importance to events in this part of the globe. Inter Press Service, a news agency, was one such initiative, one of whose brightest moments came with its tracking down of the true perpetrator of the Oklahoma bombing, Timothy McVeigh. The American authorities—and media—were quick to blame foreign terrorists for the deed, and airport officials were making hell for people who looked like Arabs. IPS followed a lead that brought them all the way to McVeigh's doorstep.

But lest our anger be consumed totally by this iniquity, let us know too that this state of affairs is replicated with equal ferocity right here in this country. The discriminative reporting by the global media of the events in the Northern capitals and those in the Southern hinterlands is matched by the discriminative reporting by the national media of the events in the national capital and those in the provincial hinterlands. The iniquity is to be found right where we stand.

There is no lack of examples to show the differential attitude of the national media toward events in Metro Manila and those in the provinces. The very distribution of the pages of newspapers and the airtime of TV news shows so. Most newspapers have correspondents and even bureaus in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. But the stories from those correspondents and bureaus are fitted in at best two pages of broadsheet, most of them, as Pilger puts it, in a roundup of fillers.

The same is true of TV. Primetime TV news will typically consist of what GMA did, what bills the senators and congressmen debated (or what scandals they figured in), what happened in Metro Manila (normally crime reports) and miscellaneous stories from the provinces before some features about the feud between Vicky Belo and Rosanna Roces and the weather.

A fashion show for charity in Makati or a foreign band playing at the Folk Arts Theater is bound to get more coverage and have a longer shelf life than a drought in Davao or famine in a village in Mountain Province. Indeed, a report about congressmen having dalliances with starlets is bound to draw more unwavering scrutiny from media—and Congress—than provincial journalists having brushes, near or complete, with death. What we call the national media are essentially the Metro Manila media.

I said it before and I say it again: That is the broader perspective from which to view the new national pastime (it has replaced kidnapping Chinese businessmen) which is murdering journalists. That perspective is that the national media are riveted only, or mainly, to the affairs of Metro Manila.

Of course, the murders of the provincial journalists (the "provincial" there is by no means a casual modifier, it is the heart of the matter: all the murdered journalists are provincial journalists) have been reported by the national media. But to get an idea about the relative lightness which they have been dealt with, imagine someone from ABS-CBN or GMA7, or from the INQUIRER or the Star, meeting with mayhem while doing his or her job one fine day. Heaven forbid that should happen. But if that unthinkable thing should happen, how do you suppose the national media would react? Neither Malacañang nor the Senate or House nor the police nor any institution of this society will have a day of peace from the deafening and incessant demand from media for the perpetrators of the deed to be caught and punished.

You don't hear that with the deaths of the provincial journalists.

The murder of journalists won't stop simply by increasing the bounty for the capture of the cutthroats. It may help by fanning greed, but it won't do much else. Not if everything is forgotten with token justice done, and everyone goes his merry way afterward. Certainly, it won't stop with arming endangered journalists. The problem there, as I said before, is not just that it is ineffective (you can't stop a determined assassin, short of not appearing in public), it is that it turns the journalists into a threat to other citizens (journalists can be abusive, too, especially those with guns). The only way to stop the murders is to create the kind of deterrent you find in the national capital, where the price of the crime becomes far too steep to carry out.

That means the national media taking these murders very, very personally. Nothing else will do the trick.

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Lee dynasty grips Singapore

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

SINGAPORE, Southeast Asia's most dynamic economy, had a transfer of power on Thursday last week, when Lee Hsien Loong took his oath as the country's third prime minister in 39 years. His take-over from Go Chok Tong, who formally announced that he was stepping down on Singapore's National Day last Aug. 9, raised the issue of dynastic rule, since the new prime minister is the son of the first prime minister, Lee Kuan Yew, who is widely regarded as the father of modern Singapore. He took office 14 years after his father stepped down.

Lee Hsien Loong, 52, like his father, was educated at Cambridge University, and had been groomed for the top leadership by his father, serving in the wings as a finance minister in the Cabinet of Goh Chok Tong, who is also a protégé of the elder Lee. The well-paved succession arrangement raises questions in Southeast Asia, where dynastic rule is common, whether nepotism is compatible with the meritocratic culture fostered by Lee Kuan Yew as the formula for the building of Singapore into a modern economy.

The younger Lee had held the rank of brigadier in the Singapore military. The troika of Lee, Goh and the new prime minister has been irreverently referred to as "The Trinity—father, son and the Holy Goh." The question that looms in the horizon is whether Lee's accession foreshadows a return of his father's autocratic rule or a reversal of the more laid back and consensus style of administration of Goh who, as a sign of his popularity, was given a standing ovation by 60,000 cheering Singaporean citizens during their National Day parade.

Southeast Asia is known for long-serving leaders, among whom were President Suharto of Indonesia, Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad of Malaysia and President Ferdinand Marcos. Nepotism and dynasty-building are not uncommon in the region. President Megawati Sukarnoputri of Indonesia is the daughter of Indonesia's first president, Sukarno, and is seeking reelection. President Macapagal-Arroyo is the daughter of President Diosdado Macapagal, a contemporary of Sukarno. The network of political dynasties in the Philippines is quite extensive, and the last Philippine elections saw a number of members of political families running for Congress and provincial and other local offices.

The Filipino political families are less anchored on technocratic values than Singapore's, although the meritocracy-based Singaporean culture spells the difference in political and administrative outcomes. Lee Kuan Yew has left a legacy of careful preparation of succession to ensure two things: a smooth transfer of power and to provide an oversight of the economic infrastructure built by his government of 25 years, among which is the provident fund which is a financial well-spring for public works and socialized housing.

The political control exercised by the People's Action Party has ensured the succession arrangements set up by Lee Kuan Yew as well as Singapore's political stability. His legacy of fashioning a system of custodianship to see to it that the fund is not squandered is reflected in the succession of structure. Goh slides into the position of senior minister, held by Lee Kuan Yew since he stepped down in 1990, while Lee walks into the newly created position of "minister mentor," with wings hovering over Goh and his son.

The Think Center, an independent political non-government organization in Singapore, said, "The main challenge for Lee would be to step out of senior minister's shadow and have his own mandate. " The center says Singapore does not want a dynasty, a concept that is at odds with a modern and global society such as Singapore.

The Lee family dismisses talk about a dynasty, emphasizing the technocratic framework in which the succession has been prepared. A poll conducted by the government-controlled Straits Times showed about 47 percent of Singaporeans believed that being the senior minister's son "is one reason" the younger Lee became prime minister. However, the poll also showed that 83 percent thought he was the best man for the job.

Lee's assumption of the top post had long been anticipated, and it would have shocked Singaporeans if he did not become prime minister. He takes office at a time when unemployment is high (at 4.5 percent), although growth this year is forecast at 9 percent. Lee is more in the mold of his father than Goh. He is seen as a brusque autocrat from a privileged background, with a reputation for having a short temper.

In an interview in 2000, when he was being prepared for succession, Lee Hsien Loong addressed the question of dynastic privilege. He said: "I don't think it's a coincidence. We happen to have a family. I mean, everybody is competitive and has tried to do well. But are you there because of your family connection or are you there because you are the best man for the job and the system has thrown you up? That's what people have to decide and I don't think anybody seriously believes that in Singapore, because of me and my wife or my brother, therefore, that nepotism prevails in Singapore."

During his administration, Goh relaxed a number of disciplinary restrictions clamped by Lee Kuan Yew, including the ban on sticking chewing gum on public toilets.

William Case, associate professor of business at Griffith University, in Queensland, Australia, said: "No one doubts Lee's technocratic and managerial skills, his resilience and his understanding of finance. He has the capacity to lead in a technocratic way, but he will not mobilize the support of the population."

Flavor of the media moment

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

ONE would think that, judging by her chosen screen name alone, Keana Reeves would either be laughed out of the House of Representatives or sued by the original Reeves for copyright infringement. Instead, she is the "flavor of the media moment," her name surfacing in almost every radio and TV talk show, making appearances in shows across the spectrum (from "Insider" to "The Buzz"), and provoking the ire of a congressman.

Ever since she revealed on "Kontrobersyal" that she and other starlets had taken on work as "escorts" to foreigners and locals, including members of Congress, Keana has basked in the spotlight, plunging neckline and all. Now she may have reason to regret this publicity stunt, if that's what it is. A party-list representative is giving Keana a stark choice: either reveal the name or names of her legislator-customers or face jail time for engaging in prostitution, which is, believe it or not, still a crime in our statutes.

Now that's bullying. Keana says she's decided against naming names because she can't be sure the congressmen could give her the protection she needs. The party-list representative insists Keana has a duty to put herself in harm's way because, while she refuses to identify specific customers, the entire House membership remains under suspicion—from their spouses, if not their constituents. I suspect that the Muslim party-list representative isn't so much interested in protecting his and his colleagues' reputation as in frightening Keana, and others like her with similar stories to tell, into silence.

We can't discount either what ANC newscaster Carmina Constantino calls "the *chismis* factor," the prurient curiosity of a public thirsting for scandal for which their esteemed representatives are only too willing to accommodate them.

But should we lay on Keana's shoulders the burden of addressing, through legislation, the age-old and seemingly intractable problem of prostitution?

* * *

AS OTHERS have pointed out, this isn't the first time, nor will it be the last, that scandals involving prominent personalities engaging the services of sex workers have hit the headlines. But once the heat died down and the attention of the fickle public waned, our lawmakers and policy makers similarly lost interest, moving on to the next scandal.

Still as one controversy faded into the next, the basic problem, the basic law on prostitution, remained unchanged.

The penal code, which dates back to Spanish times, declares that prostitution is a crime, but a crime only for the woman who engages in it, that is, who trades her sexual services for money. Under our laws, only the prostitute is the criminal in the crime of prostitution. And also under our laws, only a woman can be a prostitute.

This is why it is only the women we see being hauled off naked or half-naked to the police station whenever cops put it in their minds to raid a club or nude stage show. This is why it's only women who are charged with "lewd behavior," "vagrancy" or prostitution, even as the men who profit from their exploitation—their pimps, recruiters, club owners and their customers—get off scot-free.

Studies have shown time and again that of all the people who profit from prostitution, it's the sex worker, usually a woman though the worker could also be a man or child, who earns the least from the "transaction." The customer, of course, is the one who "pays," but only in cash, and he gets considerable bang for the buck, to put it crudely. But what does the woman, man or child compelled to trade sexual services for money pay in exchange?

* * *

IN AN interview on her late-night news show, Constantino wanted to know if we should consider women like Keana Reeves "victims" since they apparently freely chose to enter this line of work and have earned considerably more than they would as, say, *labanderas*, nursemaids, clerks or even struggling starlets.

True, sex work pays more compared to most livelihoods that young women with no marketable skills are forced to take. But is it a career or way of life the average child aspires to?

From what I have gleaned from conversations with women forced into sex work, as borne out by other, more comprehensive studies, many women sex workers have a history of childhood sexual abuse that damaged their sense of self and their integrity. Many confess to feeling forever "damaged" or "dirtied," such that engaging in prostitution seems to them the only "proper" work for them. One told me she encountered former teachers and even nurses in the *casas* and clubs, so obviously money was not the only consideration.

* * *

VICTIMIZATION comes in many forms. Many women in prostitution found themselves there after they were kidnapped, lured or entrapped. Others are in the industry out of sheer desperation, out of eagerness to help support their families. And some may tell themselves they freely and even eagerly chose the oldest profession, even as they have yet to deal with the demons of their past that can't let them move on.

This is why women's groups, especially those that advocate the rights and welfare of women in sex work, have been lobbying for years to have our laws on prostitution amended, to change the view that the women in the trade are criminals. Instead, they should be seen as victims in need of protection, if not rescue.

More importantly, those who truly profit from prostitution—the pimps, brothel owners, traffickers, club managers—and those truly responsible for sustaining the industry—the customers—should be made answerable to the law.

Whatever her motivations, Keana Reeves has swept aside once more the curtains of hypocrisy around prostitution. Let's hope the curtains stay open for longer than usual.

Language lesson

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

WHEN I am deep into research, I often forget to cross the line between past and present, resulting in some confusion. Last week, I wrote about "Linggo ng Wika" as experienced by school children. Dr. Aurora Batnag, director of the Commission on the Filipino Language, e-mailed to say that since 1997 Linggo ng Wika has been expanded and August is now Buwan ng Wika. Furthermore, the former Surian ng Wikang Pambansa or the Institute of the National Language has been converted into a commission. No wonder that it was proposed to turn the present National Historical Institute (formerly the National Heroes Commission) back into a Commission for Philippine (or National) History. But will a change in name result in a change of focus and output?

As a historian, I often wish that a time machine really existed outside sci-fi novels and movies. A time machine will enable historians to interview people we only know through books and old documents. Time machines can also help change history by telling people what consequences will follow the actions and decisions they make. For example, how different would our history be if Rizal was not shot in Bagumbayan? What if Bonifacio were pardoned by Aguinaldo? What if Antonio Luna did not proceed to Cabanatuan in 1899 to be assassinated by Aguinaldo's bodyguards? What would have happened if Laurel did not acquit Marcos in the Nalundasan murder case? Would history be different if Benigno Aquino were not shot in the airport and became president of the Philippines?

Altering history will not ensure that we will get a good result. The late Teodoro Agoncillo used to tell me that historians already had a full load just dealing with what actually happened and here I was trying to find answers to "what-if" questions. Of course, this was a futile exercise, but one must admit that sometimes what did not happen in the past can be more engaging than what actually happened.

When I imagine going back in time, I also prepare by going to antique shops to buy old coins and paper money so I can survive in the past. Maybe I should have old-style clothes made so I would not be too conspicuous. Often I wonder if my 21st century Filipino would be understood in the 19th century.

Two decades ago, a Tagalog-speaking Russian scholar was invited to Manila to deliver the Annual Rizal Lecture in Fort Santiago. Of course, Filipinos were amazed that Dr. Igor Podberesky was interested in Rizal and that he knew Tagalog, but when he started to speak, many could not catch what he was saying, and not because of his accent but rather because speaking to him was like talking to Balagtas! He spoke in a florid 19th-century polite Tagalog.

I remember attending a welcome dinner where his first line was, "*Ako'y isang huwad na Filipino* (I'm a fake Filipino)." Someone pulled my sleeve and whispered, "*Ano raw? Hubad?*" I whispered back, "*Hindi hubad, huwad.*" And she asked what it meant. I spent the entire evening translating a Russian's Tagalog to a fellow Filipino.

Would a similar confusion result if a historian went back through time?

To prepare for my time travel, I opened the two-volume work of J. Mallat, "Les Philippines Histoire Geographie, Moeurs, agriculture, industrie, commerce des colonies espagnoles dans l'oceanie," first published in Paris in 1846, because it contains a table of typical conversations in French that are translated into Tagalog and Visayan. Just reading this shows how differently they wrote Tagalog in 1846. The conversation also gives us a glimpse into the life of a servant and her lady. It runs:

"Are you still in bed?/*Nahihiga papo cayo hangan ngayon sa banig?* Are you sleeping?/*Cayo poy natutulog pa?* Wake up./*Gumising cana.* Get up at once./*Tumindig cang madali.* Is it by chance already time to get up?/*Sabagay oras na nang paguising?* No doubt it is!/*Capilitan nanga!* Comb yourself./*Manuclay ca.* Why do you speak to me in Tagalog?/*Baquit mo po pinaguicaan aco nang tagalog?* Always speak in Spanish./*Uicain mo po sa aquin nang castila.* Do you wish to take breakfast?/*Ibig po ba niñong mag almosal?* Do you have a good needle?/*Mayroon po ba cayong isang mabuting carayom?* Do you have cotton thread?/*Mayroon po ba cayong sinulid?* Let us go play a little./*Paroon cana samandali maglaro.* Let us go for a walk in the garden./*Magpasial cana sa jardin.* Don't expose yourself to the sun's heat./*Huag cang mag painit.* Go and get a chair./*Halicana comuha nang isang taburete.* Tell me your taste./*Sabihin mo ang yong caibigan.* Ask for something to drink./*Homingi ca nang mainom.* Did you eat enough?/*Nacacain capo nang marami?* Go and dance./*Hayonat mag sayao.* Look at me./*Tinghan mopo aco.* Go and sing now./*Ilayona ngayon at ycao magcanta.* You sing delightfully./*Comamo papo cayo ay mariquit.* Play the piano or the harp./*Tomogtog po cayo nang piano o arpa.* Now the spanish guitar./*Ay ngayon ang guitarang castila.* The first string is worthless./*Ang yong pirma ualang cabuluhan.* What do you wish for a snack or for supper?/*Anong ibig mong minindalin o hapunan?* Come and have supper./*Halicana humapon.* It is time to go to bed./*Oras na nang paghiga.* Pray./*Magdasal.*

A whole lifestyle is contained in this language lesson pointing us into a little known historical resource: dictionaries and grammar books.

* * *

Comments are welcome at acoampo@ateneo.edu

Autisms

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

A NOVEL where an autistic teenager solves the mystery of a neighbor's murdered poodle?

Why not? Mark Haddon's "The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time" makes for a fascinating read as you "listen" to the mind of 15-year-old Christopher, while he unravels a crime involving a murdered dog.

Early in the novel, we realize that Christopher is autistic. His mind plays with numbers, and he loves maps and all kinds of trivial facts. He admits he doesn't like people too much and, no wonder, he has difficulties reading their facial expressions, and hates being touched. But note that he can't tell lies, not even a white lie.

The novel is fast-paced, something you can read on the plane as I did, but be careful because it goes in all sorts of directions as you try to keep up with Christopher's brain, processing the world in the peculiar way autistics do. His trip to London, done on his own, is especially gripping as he tries to figure out what train to take, and how to make his way to a particular address in the city.

Autisms and Asperger's

I'm not surprised Haddon's book is listed in several websites listing resources for families with autistic children. Haddon himself worked with autistics, and deftly drew on his experiences to write this novel. In the process, he reaches a much wider audience with a non-technical perspective on autisms.

I'm using the plural here because autism actually refers to a range of conditions. The term was first coined in Germany in 1912 by the Swiss psychiatrist Paul Bleuler: "autismus" derived from "auto," meaning self and "ismus," the state of. Autism is "the state of self," and was first used to refer to children who seemed caught in their own world, oblivious to their external environment.

In many societies, including our own, such children may be labeled as mentally retarded, and end up isolated and neglected. But the autistic are also often "fixated" on particular tasks, and will exhibit amazing skills in a specific field, such as math, music, painting.

As neurologists and psychiatrists saw more patients, they realized that autism took many variations. Some of the patients were very dependent on their families while others, so-called high-functioning autistics, could live on their own.

In 1944, a Viennese physician, Hans Asperger, published a paper about young boys who had normal intelligence and language development but who had autistic-like behaviors, such as being obsessed with certain routines, and having difficulty reading people's body language and emotions. As with the other autisms, the medical world later realized that Asperger's was more common than they thought, and that some of the people with this condition were very bright and become leaders in professions that require an almost obsessive concentration on particular tasks.

Nerds, geeks, males

It's not surprising that there's speculation that Albert Einstein had Asperger's. Nerds and geeks may actually be "high-functioning" autistics or people with Asperger's. Note how very bright people will sometimes be very awkward with social skills (sometimes, in exasperation, we even call them "social morons"). Males, incidentally, outnumber females when it comes to autistics (who knows, maybe so-called male insensitivity may actually be a variation of Asperger's).

But we should certainly differentiate people with Asperger's from the mean, the vicious and the corrupt, those who have trapped themselves in dull and drab worlds of their own making, so completely differently from the fascinating and vibrant worlds of autistics and Aspergers.

Haddon's mystery novel allows us to peek into these special minds, while reminding us of how autisms are becoming so much a part of our lives. The psychiatrist Hans Asperger would be pleased, for example, to know his surname is now used rather commonly, as in, "Oh dear, I think I married an Asperger."

As we understand the spectrum of conditions here, we become more accepting, and understanding. Teaching in a university, I can tell you we have more than the regular share of Aspergers, and that this makes life in the academe both exciting ("What a genius. She must be an Asperger.") and exasperating ("Can't he just shut up and let others speak? He must be an Asperger.")

The writing professions, print journalism included, also probably has a greater share of Aspergers, given the way you need to collect and collate facts and images in your head and transform them into an article, essay or novel. Yes, maybe even columnists, especially those who write about the strangest topics, maybe Aspergers.

Disorders or variations?

Easy now. I know some of you are getting nervous, the way Aspergers sound like Martians. I can imagine people in offices suddenly asking each other, as they look to a colleague, "Is he or isn't he?"

I do worry that the medical profession, by attaching labels, may inadvertently stigmatize these conditions. There are debates, for example, about what Asperger's really is, with all kinds of alternative labels proposed: Is it a form of high-functioning autism? Or a form of attention-deficit disorder?

The term "disorder" makes me uneasy. Certainly, there are many autistic individuals who need medical and social services, but the nerds and geeks will manage quite well, thank you. In fact, I often tell my students that if all humans were "*sosyal*," too busy making friends and socializing, humanity would still be stuck in caves. We needed the introverted nerds and geeks retreating into their own worlds to reflect, and to discover fire and invent the first tools.

I'd suggest that by moving away from psychiatric labels with its connotations of medical treatment, we might be in a better position to find social niches for the whole range of autisms. BBC had a news item a few weeks back about a Danish man who had put up a computer programming firm that mainly hired autistics because of the way they could concentrate. It turned out the man has an autistic son, who he hopes will eventually work in that firm.

That is a more dramatic case of carving out a social niche for an autistic child. For families with autistics and Aspergers, a more basic need is to simply pass on some social skills. There are now quite a few books and websites offering advice for families to help autistics function better in society.

Autistics and Aspergers, for example, may have difficulties working with people because they seem selfish and mean, running all over people's feelings with unreasonable demands and blunt remarks. This could be avoided if, in childhood, an Aspergers learns there's a world of people out there who also have their needs, and that they will need to take extra effort to "read" people's feelings. How is this done? Even being conscious about looking into the eyes of a child with Aspergers while communicating is said to be vitally important in teaching some of the basic social skills.

We still have a lot of learn about autistic conditions, and as we learn more, we might come to accept these conditions as part of the variations that make humanity so interesting.

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After 'sin' taxes, prepare for 'popularity' taxes

WITH inflation rising to 6.6 percent because of high oil prices, the proposal of the government to increase taxes to solve our budget deficit is a sword of Damocles over the heads of the poverty-stricken Filipino people. Among the proposed taxes that would increase the sufferings of the people are the additional excise tax on oil products and the tax on text messaging.

With the international prices of crude oil at their highest level, the proposed additional tax on oil products would make transportation costs prohibitive. On the other hand, the additional taxes on communication companies, imposed mainly on text messages, would make this popular form of communications more expensive. Oil and text messaging are both essential to the day-to-day activities of Filipinos. Instead of imposing additional taxes, the government should plug tax loopholes by seeing to it that all taxes due the government are collected. Studies show that billions of pesos in revenues are lost annually because of tax evasion, especially by the rich. Also, in the field of tax administration, there is widespread corruption in the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs.

The government should stop trying to impose an additional tax on text messaging for the reason that it is popular. "Texting," indeed, has become the most popular vehicle of communication among low-income groups because it is cheap and fast. Taxing a service simply because it is popular is cruel and unjust. I appeal to the government to drop this unrealistic and unkind proposal.

—RITA MORALES,
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Parañaque City

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Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

Choices and the population issue

THE COMMENTARIES on the saga of Angelo de la Cruz overlooked an important point. The oversight may be indicative of the hold of the Roman Catholic Church on the lives of our people.

With no jobs available in the Philippines, limited skills and eight mouths to feed (not to mention other obligations to the extended family in the village) what else could De la Cruz do? And it is not—as President Macapagal-Arroyo would like us to believe—that the Filipino will settle for work anywhere abroad because he is not afraid; he does so because he has no choice.

Typical of countless Filipinos, De la Cruz was left with no other choice but to find work in a foreign land as a means of survival. Never mind if it paid poorly (relative to foreign pay standards for equivalent work), was hazardous and even degrading. His family deserves a decent life.

This is not to begrudge De la Cruz for fathering eight children. This is only to point out that his options might have been different had he a smaller family. Finding a job abroad, despite its heavy social and psychological costs, would not have been as pressing.

On the other hand, GMA's reform packages will not be able to deliver the six to 10 million jobs that would bring home a substantial number of overseas Filipino workers and reunite them with their families; much less will the reforms be able to accommodate the flood of new graduates entering the labor market in the next six years—not without a genuine population program. Something has to be done to keep our population at a more sustainable level.

If GMA was able to stand up to the United States by pulling out the small Filipino contingent in Iraq, why can't she stand up to the Church on the population issue? Let us stop this pretense that we can solve our other problems without addressing the issues on population.

—RAMON C. SEVILLA,
foreign expert/assistant professor,
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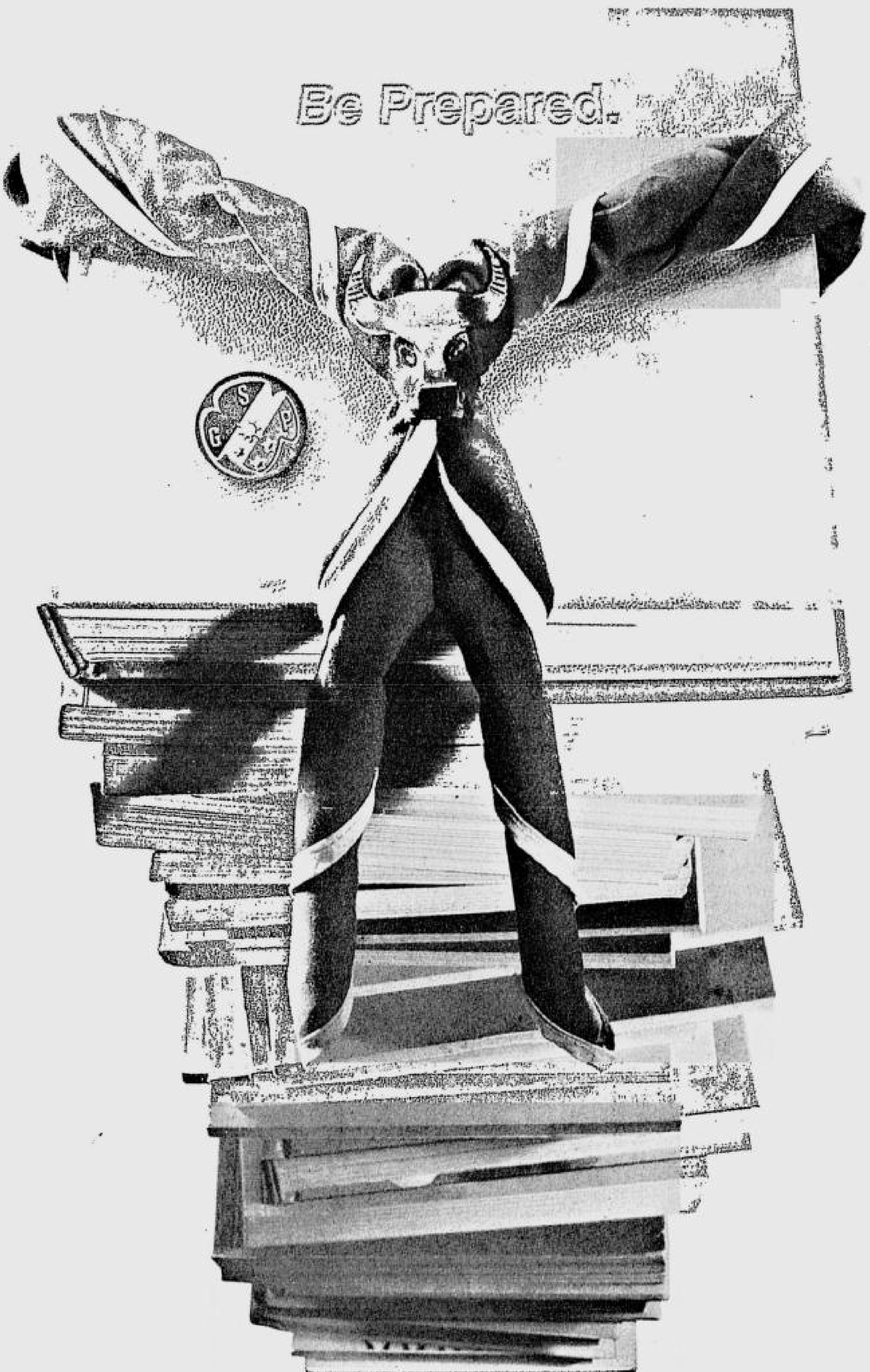

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Make laws from people's viewpoint, lawmakers challenged

THE MEMBERS of both chambers of Congress would do well to remember that they owe their loyalty not to President Macapagal-Arroyo but to the Filipino people and their respective constituencies, who are mostly workers and ordinary citizens.

The administration's proposed tax measures are clearly an attack to ordinary Filipinos, especially the workers and the poor. Additional tax burdens can never be good especially when imposed on those who have not enjoyed wage and benefit increases in the last six years.

It is a shame that Ms Arroyo has mentioned nothing about increasing the salaries of government employees, or putting an end to the oil price hikes and the electricity rate increases in her State of the Nation Address (Sona) last July 26. Instead, she called on the Filipino people to carry a heavier cross.

Before the administration could start creating the 10 million jobs it promised within the next six years, it opened the exit door for thousands of government employees. And it is now killing the livelihood of thousands of others and undermining the economic security of millions more by calling for higher fees and taxes, while cutting back on social benefits and services. The administration also plans to allot 77 percent of the proposed P901-billion 2005 national budget to foreign debt servicing.

Our legislators should look beyond their loyalties to Malacañang. They should not blindly support its proposed legislative agenda. They should first listen to the demands of their constituencies, and they will hear that the overwhelming clamor is not for more and higher taxes, not for higher electricity rates, but for stable employment, living wages, lower prices and an end to regressive taxation and foreign debt servicing. They should strongly oppose all moves to arbitrarily streamline the bureaucracy by unjust laying off of thousands of government employees.

Now more than ever, lawmakers must break away from the traditional mindset that has kept our people in the prison of underdevelopment and espouse more radical thinking. They should look at and analyze the current economic and political situation from the viewpoint of the poor and workers, and they will see that the administration's proposals offer nothing but more misery and poverty for our people.

The government has another think coming if it believes that the Filipino people will meekly accept new taxes and allow cutbacks in the budgetary allocations for vital social services such as health, housing and education. The President's credibility as an elected official is still being contested, and there are still millions of Filipinos who refuse to recognize her victory, much less her leadership. New taxes will be added fuel to the bonfire of public resentment and restiveness against her government.

Malacañang and its allies in Congress will not be able to push their anti-people legislative agenda without facing the strongest possible opposition from the progressives and militants in the House of Representatives, and more importantly, from the people's movement.

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Is GSIS dying?

THERE have been reports that Winston Garcia, general manager of the Government Service Insurance System, has warned that the "lifespan of GSIS is only five to eight years." This is worrisome. Something should be done. If GSIS cannot be saved anymore because of mismanagement, at least our remittances must be returned to us. It's a pity that this government lending institution is on the verge of bankruptcy. Those responsible for bringing GSIS to this situation—either because of graft and corruption or sheer incompetence or negligence—if found guilty should be prosecuted and punished.

Right now, thousands of GSIS members are outraged over what they call the "mismanagement" of GSIS funds. They are complaining why GSIS cannot pay the retirement benefits and accommodate loan applications of its members.

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SYNDICATE MEMBERS

2 cops in rob gang slain in gunfight

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—Three suspected members of a robbery syndicate, two of them policemen, were killed in separate clashes with the police here and in Solano town on Monday night.

Chief Insp. Teodoro Santos, provincial police intelligence chief, identified the slain suspects as PO1 Reynald Pinkihan and PO1 Walter Balajo, who were assigned to the Cordillera police regional office and Ifugao provincial mobile group in Lagawe town, respectively. The third suspect has yet to be identified.

Santos said Solano policemen were responding to a report of an ongoing robbery at the Fariñas farm in Barangay Roxas during a heavy rain at 9:15 p.m. Monday when they caught up with two of the suspects aboard a motorcycle.

The suspects, armed with an M-16 Armalite rifle, fired at the policemen who were in front of the Catholic church in downtown Solano.

Santos said this prompted the policemen to shoot back.

First casualty

The ensuing gunfight resulted in the immediate death of the driver, Balajo, while Pinkihan fled aboard a commandeered tricycle.

Reinforcements from the Bayombong police, led by Santos, traced the suspects' escape route to Barangay Casat here, where they clashed with Pinkihan and another companion.

Recovered from the suspects were P40,000 in cash, an M-16 Armalite rifle, a .45 cal. pistol, a .38 cal. revolver, bullets, a cellular phone and a small stone encased in a woven bag, reportedly Pinkihan's amulet.

Police also recovered two bloodied bulletproof vests worn by the two policemen during the heist.

Santos said the group could be remnants of the Solid Ifugao robbery group that was reported to be behind the series of robberies in Solano and Villaverde towns, as well as in Isabela and Quirino.

"We are still (hunting) two or three more of their members who also participated in the robbery," Santos said.

Melvin Gascon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

4 hurt in grenade attack in Batangas

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Four people, including a Muntinlupa policeman and his two sons, were seriously injured after an unidentified suspect threw a hand grenade in front of their house inside a subdivision in Sto. Tomas, Batangas just before dusk on Monday.

Chief Insp. Raul Tacaca, town police chief, said victim PO2 Jujardin Velasco, 34, assigned at the Special Weapon and Tactics Team of the Muntinlupa police, was talking with neighbor Carlito Mendoza, 47, in front of his house at around 6:30 p.m. in Blue Isle Subdivision in Barangay Sta. Maria when the suspect on board a jeep came out of nowhere and lobbed a hand grenade at them.

Velasco's two sons, aged 1 and 2, who were playing near the area, were also injured in the attack.

They were rushed to the Mercado Hospital in Tanauan City for treatment.

The policeman's Kawasaki motorcycle was also damaged in the explosion, police said.

The motive for the attack is still undetermined. Tacaca said police are still talking with Velasco's relatives and co-workers to find out if he had enemies.

"Luckily, there were witnesses who saw the suspect buying something from the victim's store before the incident happened. Maybe they could give us important details to identify the suspect," Tacaca said. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

ROUNDUP

Traders behind marijuana

DAVAO CITY—Wealthy businessmen are allegedly behind the proliferation of marijuana plantations in Davao del Sur, according to planters who recently surrendered to authorities. Supt. Wilkins Villanueva, director of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) in Southern Mindanao, said the 79 planters who surrendered last week even gave them the names of the supposed financiers of marijuana plantations. He said the PDEA was digging deeper into the allegations. Because of the surrender of the planters from Malita town, authorities located and uprooted marijuana plants worth about P1 million.

Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Grenade lobbed

DAVAO CITY—Unidentified men lobbed a hand grenade at the house of Davao del Sur Gov. Benjamin Joseph Bautista in Digos City yesterday dawn. But Supt. Nestor Quinsay, Davao del Sur police chief, said no one was hurt in the attack, which damaged some glass windows of Bautista's room. Quinsay said the governor was in Manila when the attack happened at around 1:30 a.m. House guards Rico Sarmiento and Jun Abadilla and three staff members were inside the house when the suspects hurled the grenade. Sarmiento said he was taking coffee at the kitchen when they heard an explosion. He said he thought that the blast just came from an exploded fluorescent lamp, so they never checked outside. The guards learned about the attack only at 6 a.m. when they found shrapnels near the window.

Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau

NPA leader nabbed

CALAMBA CITY—Police arrested an alleged top official of the New People's Army (NPA) operating in Occidental Mindoro inside an apartment in Cubao, Quezon City Thursday. Mimaropa police said Calixto "Ka Mejie" Guilas, 31, of Barangay Iriron, Calintaan, Occidental Mindoro, was involved in a string of kidnapping, robbery and murder cases in Mindoro. Guilas, who is listed as the second most wanted person in the province, was arrested based on seven warrants of arrest issued by Judge Josefino Garillo of the Calintaan municipal trial court, police said. But communist spokesman Gregorio Rosal said Guilas was no longer connected with the rebel movement since 2001.

Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

NPA attacks Army station

LEGAZPI CITY—About 20 armed men suspected to be New People's Army rebels fired at an Army detachment in Barangay Culacling, Lupi, Camarines Sur on Friday night. Military reports said the 10-minute gunfight that resulted in the wounding of Army Pfc. Bayangan Sabao. The rebels fled toward the hilly southern part of the village. Army Lt. Col. Serafin Raymundo, spokesperson of the Army's 9th Infantry Division based in Camarines Sur, said despite the incident, the Army would continue supporting government programs in remote barangays

Ronnie Lorejo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Luzon, magbantay para sa tamang bilang!

TEXTBOOK COUNT 2

Schedule and allocation of textbooks per region

	Region/Division	No. of Recipient Elem.	No. of School Districts	No. of High Schools	GRAND TOTAL TX/TM/LP	Delivery Schedule
GRAND TOTAL - ZONE 1		7,986	512	1,291	2,486,155	
I	TOTAL	2,264	150	413	679,620	
	Regional Office				4,881	Jul 26 - Aug 20
	La Union	323	24	67	95,204	Jul 26 - Aug 6
	Pangasinan I	523	31	108	190,868	Jul 26 - Aug 6
	Alaminos City	35	1	7	13,361	Jul 26 - Aug 6
	Pangasinan II	442	32	98	155,367	Jul 26 - Aug 6
	Ilocos Norte	330	23	31	56,758	Aug 2 - 13
	Ilocos Sur	425	24	53	73,510	Aug 2 - 13
	Candon City	24	2	4	7,493	Aug 2 - 13
	Laoag City	33	3	5	16,298	Aug 11 - 13
	Dagupan City	33	4	5	18,709	Aug 11 - 13
	San Carlos City	51	4	16	24,776	Aug 16 - 20
	Urdaneta City	45	2	19	22,393	Aug 16 - 20
II	TOTAL	1,834	118	266	416,789	
	Regional Office				2,526	Jul 26 - Aug 20
	Batanes	20	5	7	4,221	Jul 26 - Aug 6
						Aug 9 - 20
						Aug 23 - Sept 3
	Isabela	862	49	123	193,365	Jul 26 - Aug 6
	Cagayan	601	37	79	122,336	Aug 2 - 13
	Nueva Vizcaya	286	16	37	50,152	Aug 2 - 13
	Quirino	139	7	16	22,835	Aug 9 - 20
	Tuguegarao City	26	4	4	21,354	Aug 16 - 18
III	TOTAL	2,614	176	401	1,101,639	
	Regional Office				4,002	Jul 26 - Aug 20
	Aurora	118	8	25	38,195	Jul 26 - Aug 6
						Aug 9-20
						Aug 23-Sept 3
	Bulacan	426	27	64	226,972	Jul 26 - Aug 6
	Nueva Ecija	561	32	83	185,613	Jul 26 - Aug 6
	Science City of Muñoz	30	1	1	10,962	Jul 26 - Aug 6
	Pampanga	421	28	77	172,721	Aug 2 - 13
	Tarlac	382	28	52	120,895	Aug 2 - 13
	Zambales	219	15	35	58,860	Aug 2 - 13
	Bataan	156	12	23	71,139	Aug 9 - 20
	Balanga City	16	2	1	11,164	Aug 9 - 20
	Gapan City	31	2	7	15,594	Aug 9 - 11
	San Jose del Monte City	24	2	4	50,498	Aug 9 - 11
	Cabanatuan City	56	4	6	18,347	Aug 11 - 13
	Angeles City	40	3	6	35,403	Aug 16 - 18
	Olongapo City	24	4	9	28,723	Aug 16 - 18
	Tarlac City	77	5	6	24,022	Aug 16 - 18
	San Fernando City	33	3	2	28,520	Aug 18 - 20
CAR	TOTAL	1,174	68	211	288,107	
	Regional Office				114	Jul 26 - Aug 20
	Benguet	293	14	41	67,946	Jul 26 - Aug 6
						Aug 9 - 20
						Aug 23 - Sept 3
	Ifugao	178	11	28	37,176	Jul 26 - Aug 6
						Aug 9 - 20
						Aug 23 - Sept 3
	Kalinga	180	10	32	41,785	Jul 26 - Aug 6
						Aug 9 - 20
						Aug 23 - Sept 3
	Apayao	106	7	19	20,949	Aug 02 - 13
						Aug 16 - 27
						Aug 30 - Sept 10
	Mt. Province	154	10	40	35,531	Aug 2 - 13
						Aug 16 - 27
						Aug 30 - Sept 10
	Abra	227	12	32	42,769	Aug 09 - 20
						Aug 23 - Sept 3
						Sept 06 - 17
	Baguio City	36	4	19	41,837	Aug 09 - 13
GRAND TOTAL - ZONE 2		7,481	526	1,484	4,905,444	
IV-A	TOTAL	2,468	167	487	1,712,740	
	Regional Office				5,058	Aug 23 - Sept 17
	Batangas	550	31	90	240,329	Aug 23 - Sept 3
	Laguna	304	24	70	268,323	Aug 23 - Sept 3
	Quezon	783	46	150	337,064	Aug 23 - Sept 3
	Cavite	334	29	65	360,967	Aug 30 - Sept 10
	Rizal	189	13	39	225,842	Aug 30 - Sept 10
	Lipa City	62	4	15	33,587	Sept 6 - 10
	Calamba City	50	3	16	45,539	Sept 6 - 10
	Tanauan City	42	1	11	24,091	Sept 6 - 8
	Lucena City	40	4	3	25,244	Sept 6 - 8
	San Pablo City	63	7	11	37,765	Sept 13 - 17
	Antipolo City	39	2	15	88,896	Sept 13 - 17
	Cavite City	12	3	2	20,035	Sept 13 - 15
IV-B	TOTAL	1,646	84	294	589,975	
	Regional Office				2,709	Aug 23 - Sept 15
	Mindoro Occidental	266	15	46	93,760	Aug 23 - Sept 3
	Palawan	528	23	90	148,956	Aug 23 - Sept 3
	Romblon	198	13	31	73,499	Aug 23 - Sept 3
	Marinduque	168	9	43	58,917	Aug 30 - Sept 10
	Mindoro Oriental	375	18	55	138,262	Aug 30 - Sept 10
	Puerto Princesa City	63	3	20	45,319	Sept 6 - 10
	Calapan City	48	3	9	28,553	Sept 13 - 15
V	TOTAL	2,873	160	507	1,120,070	
	Regional Office				4,005	Aug 23 - Sept 17
	Albay	427	22	76	176,212	Aug 23 - Sept 3
	Camarines Norte	249	14	43	109,541	Aug 23 - Sept 3
	Camarines Sur	777	38	155	295,416	Aug 23 - Sept 3
	Catanduanes	215	20	38	60,180	Aug 30 - Sept 10
	Masbate	511	26	67	147,339	Aug 30 - Sept 10
	Sorsogon	414	20	71	140,552	Aug 30 - Sept 10
	Ligao City	45	2	11	23,368	Sept 6 - 8
	Iriga City	39	3	8	21,590	Sept 6 - 8
	Legaspi City	40	4	8	30,001	Sept 8 - 10
	Naga City	23	3	8	34,238	Sept 8 - 10
	Sorsogon City	65	4	11	30,591	Sept 13 - 17
	Tabaco City	36	2	9	27,280	Sept 13 - 15
	Masbate City	32	2	2	19,757	Sept 13 - 14
NCR	TOTAL	494	115	196	1,482,659	
	Regional Office				1,956	Aug 23 - Sept 10
	Manila	71	43	32	269,931	Aug 23 - 31
	Quezon City	95	19	46	242,120	Aug 23 - 31
	Caloocan City	52	7	26	214,086	Aug 23 - 31
	Pasay City	19	4	9	57,064	Aug 23 - 27
	Makati City	27	7	7	43,107	Aug 23 - 27
	Parañaque City	20	3	8	61,089	Aug 23 - 27
	Marikina City	17	2	8	61,944	Aug 30 - Sept 3
	Pasig-San Juan	36	7	11	107,610	Aug 30 - Sept 3
NCR	Valenzuela City	36	6	14	78,343	Aug 30 - Sept 3
	Las Piñas City	19	2	6	69,880	Aug 30 - Sept 1
	Muntinlupa City	16	2	4	56,935	Sept 1 - 3
	Mandaluyong City	15	2	5	34,158	Sept 6 - 8
	Malabon-Navotas	43	7	12	102,922	Sept 6 - 10
	Taguig-Pateros	28	4	8	81,514	Sept 6 - 10

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Killing of 19-yr-old woman shocks Olongapo execs

OLONGAPO CITY—The death of a 19-year-old student, who died of 17 stab wounds after she was allegedly raped, has alarmed the police and the city government as it turned out to be the bloodiest crime here in recent years.

The victim, Mary Ann Briones, was found half-naked and slumped on the floor inside the bathroom of her friend's house in Barangay West Tapinac here on Saturday morning.

Senior Supt. Orlando Maddela Jr., Olongapo police director, said the victim was stabbed and killed by a suspected drug addict using a 10-inch kitchen knife.

Witnesses identified the suspect as Alfredo Castillo, who escaped.

"It is very alarming. This city has never seen such a gory crime in the past few years," Maddela said.

Mayor James Gordon Jr. denounced the killing, which he described as one of the most brutal in the city. He ordered the police to hunt Castillo, a resident of Barangay Happy Valley in Dinalupihan, Bataan.

In sworn affidavits, witnesses said Briones and Castillo met during a drinking spree with their friends in West Tapinac here.

Hours later, the two went inside the house's bathroom and were heard talking.

Eugene Castillo, a nephew of the suspect and one of the witnesses, said he saw Briones and Castillo holding an aluminum foil and a lighter, which he suspected the two used in sniffing shabu, at around 4 a.m. Saturday.

Briones' friend, Eduardo Bautista, told investigators that he went to the house to look for Briones. "I went inside the house and knocked on the bathroom's door as I called Mary Ann. She told me that she would get out soon," Bautista said in his affidavit.

But at past 5 a.m. that day, the witnesses heard Briones shouting inside the bathroom and asking for help. Her friends heard her shouting, "*Ayaw ko na* (I don't like it anymore)!"

A few minutes later, witnesses saw Castillo leaving the bathroom with blood in his hands.

Bautista said after Castillo left, he saw the bloodied Briones slumped on the bathroom floor.

Investigators found a plastic sachet containing suspected shabu residue, five pieces of crumpled aluminum foil and a lighter inside Briones' pocket. A kitchen knife was also recovered from the bathroom.

Police could not say if Briones was raped pending the release of the results of the autopsy and laboratory tests.

"We will pursue the case against the suspect and we will not stop until he is arrested and put behind bars," Gordon said. *Allan Macatuno, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

DAVAO FIESTA BING GONZALES PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

Performers come out in full color in the streets of Davao City as it celebrates its annual Kadayawan sa Dabaw festival, a thanksgiving feast for bountiful harvests.

North expressway firm says toll hike justified

MANILA North Tollways Corp. (MNTC) yesterday urged the public to look beyond toll rates to appreciate the economic benefits to be derived by Central Luzon from the new North Luzon Expressway (NLE).

Marlene Ochoa, MNTC assistant vice president for public relations, said in a press release that "the P18 billion new NLE is envisioned to serve as catalyst for economic growth in Central Luzon which has been lagging behind Calabarzon in industrialization."

MNTC will take over operations and maintenance of the expressway before the year ends. MNTC will also implement a new toll rate system collecting from users a per kilometer fee of P2.49.

Earlier, two Pampanga officials, Rep. Ana York Bondoc and board member Nestor Tolentino called for an investigation of the increase in toll by as much as 600 to 700 percent.

In its release, MNTC said the projected toll rates are reasonable and commensurate to the benefits users will get from the first class super highway.

Motorists will also generate savings from lower vehicle operating costs. Citing results of a study made by the University of the Philippines Planning and Research Development Foundation, Inc. (UP Planades), Ochoa said "at the end of the day, it is much cheaper to travel on the NLE in terms of fuel and wear and tear of vehicle and reduced travel time."

The expansion of the capacity limit of the NLE by six to eight lanes in some portions, and from four to six lanes in other portions, was designed to accommodate a dramatic increase in vehicle volume without sacrificing speed and comfort.

Council orders poultry closed

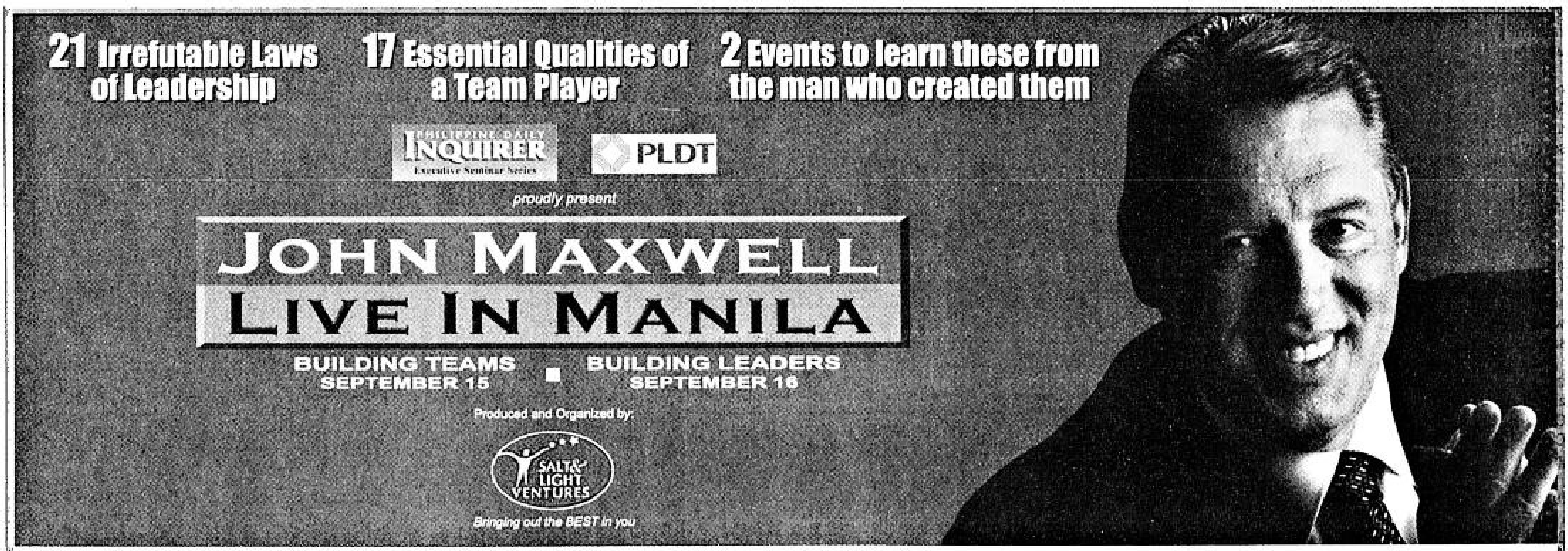
IBA, Zambales—The town council on Monday ordered the closure of a poultry located near residential areas in Barangay Sta. Barbara here in response to a petition from residents who complained about flies and foul odor coming from the farm.

Citing violations of the Local Government Code, like zoning and the non-payment of permits and taxes, the council ordered the immediate closure of the Tyson-Agro Ventures Inc. upon the approval of Mayor Danilo Pamoleras.

The farm, according to documents, is owned by former Zambales Rep. Pacita Gonzales.

A council investigation showed that the firm violated the sanitation code after health investigators confirmed the presence of large horseflies (*bangaw*) in houses in Barangay Sta. Barbara.

On a motion filed by Councilor Lanie Tabile, health committee member, the council considered the filing of civil and criminal cases against the poultry's owners. *Cesar Villa, PDI Central Luzon Desk*



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INQUIRER Northern Luzon

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Rolando B. Fernandez

Bishop brings message of hope in homecoming

By Anselmo Roque
San Jose City

BISHOP Oscar Azarcon Solis, the first Filipino ordained as auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles in the United States, sees himself as a symbol of hope for every Filipino.

"Bagoong at kanin ngayon, pero baka bukas, kare-kare na (We may be eating rice and fish paste today, but tomorrow, it may be *kare-kare*)," Solis said in describing how his accomplishment could inspire other Filipinos.

Solis, 50, returned to his native San Jose City in Nueva Ecija on Thursday last week amid a hero's welcome. His homecoming was unlike the previous years' events, when he returned almost unrecognized.

Government officials led by Nueva Ecija Rep. Eleuterio Violago and San Jose Mayor Alex Belena fetched the bishop in his family's house on Cadhit Street on Saturday morning.

Together with priests, lay people, relatives and friends, Solis and local officials participated in a motorcade before he officiated a thanksgiving Mass at the Mary Help of Christian Church in Barangay Malasin. More than 2,000 people attended the Mass.

The bishop said he was overwhelmed by the warm welcome given him since he arrived in the country early this month. He said he considered these gestures as his countrymen's way of showing him that he was "another symbol of hope for every Filipino."

"We have to be proud as a Filipino that, although we are in a Third World country, our life and culture makes a difference in the lives of other people everywhere," he said.

Greater heights

Every Filipino has the chance to rise to greater heights, he said. "We just have to be faithful to our culture and be open to God, and the blessings will always be with us."

Looking back, Solis said he belonged to an ordinary family in San Jose, 159 km north of Metro Manila. His father, an insurance man, and his mother, a school teacher, supported seven children.

From a private Catholic school, Solis was transferred to a public school, where he finished his elementary schooling.

"Malikot daw ako at pilyo raw ako noon kaya dinala ako sa public school *kung saan nandoon ang mga* relatives *ko na* teachers (My parents said I was mischievous then, so I was transferred to a public school where my relatives were teaching)," he said.

At 11, he went to the Maria Assumpta Seminary in Cabanatuan City to finish high school and then to the Christ the King Seminary in Quezon City and in a seminary in Tagaytay City, where he finished his bachelor of arts degree in philosophy.

After he was ordained priest in 1979, he returned to Cabanatuan, where he became chaplain of the Araullo University. In 1981, at 28, he became rector of the Maria Assumpta Seminary.

Sidetracked

A few years later, Solis planned to go to Rome to pursue higher studies. But he decided to go first to the US for a vacation. While in the US, he became an associate pastor of the St. Rocco's Church in Union City, New Jersey, and his plan to study in Rome was sidetracked.

In 1988, he decided to return to the Philippines, but Church officials and his parishioners prevailed upon him to stay.

He stayed in Louisiana where he became associate pastor of the St. Joseph co-cathedral (Thibodaux), pastor of the Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church (Golden Meadow), and pastor of the St. Joseph co-Cathedral and St. Luke Church.

He said his appointment as bishop came as a big surprise. *"Lalo na rito sa atin*, it's quite flattering (how I am received). I am like a big shot," he said.

And the welcome he received, he said, provided a message of hope for everybody. "In spite of who you are, no matter what is your station in life, you can expect graces from God."

On Aug. 22, Solis will say Mass at the Antipolo Cathedral and at the Christ the King Church in Quezon City. Before leaving the country, he will say Mass in Malacañang on Aug. 23, upon the invitation of President Macapagal-Arroyo, for government officials and employees.

Solis was named "Outstanding Son of San Jose City" in a city council resolution presented to him by Mayor Belena on Saturday. "Thank you all. I will be back," he told local officials and those who welcomed him home.

Solis said his biggest challenge as a bishop was to come up with pastoral plans and programs that would address the needs, concerns and issues affecting all members of ethnic groups in his archdiocese.

When he goes back to the US, he will be at his usual 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. work in the 12-story Diocesan Center in mid-town Los Angeles when he is not visiting the 288 parishes in his archdiocese.

And after the feasts that were offered him on his native land, Solis said he would go back to simple food and simple living in the US.

"(It's) back to *pangat— pangatlong init ng pagkain sa aking tinitirhang* rectory (I'll be back in my rectory eating my leftovers that I have to re-heat for three meals)," he said.

BISHOP Oscar Solis is accompanied by his 89-year-old aunt, relatives, government officials and friends on his way to a thanksgiving Mass in San Jose City in Nueva Ecija. ANSELMO ROQUE

Visayas, Mindanao, magbantay para sa tamang bilang!

TEXTBOOK COUNT 2

Schedule and allocation of textbooks per region

	Region/Division	No. of Recipient Elem.	No. of School Districts	No. of High Schools	GRAND TOTAL TX/TM/LP	Delivery Schedule
GRAND TOTAL- ZONE 3		8,522	563	1,383	2,728,397	
VI	TOTAL	3,058	201	523	1,119,352	
	Regional Office				4,242	Sept 20 - Oct 15
	Aklan	274	19	53	74,616	Sept 20 - Oct 1
	Antique	423	22	44	111,094	Sept 20 - Oct 1
	Iloilo	864	50	146	274,217	Sept 20 - Oct 1
	Negros Occidental	556	39	114	210,054	Sept 20 - Oct 1
	Capiz	389	18	38	138,721	Sept 27 - Oct 8
	Guimaras	87	8	15	34,196	Oct 4 - 6
	Passi City	32	2	5	12,626	Oct 4 - 6
	Iloilo City	49	7	14	45,519	Oct 4 - 8
	Bacolod City	44	7	20	62,564	Oct 4 - 8
	Cadiz City	51	4	11	20,808	Oct 4 - 8
	Silay City	27	4	10	17,171	Oct 4 - 8
	Roxas City	38	3	8	14,147	Oct 6 - 8
	Bago City	36	4	7	25,630	Oct 11 - 13
	San Carlos City	59	5	5	14,016	Oct 11 - 13
	Kabankalan City	56	3	18	24,947	Oct 11 - 15
	Sagay City	51	3	11	21,551	Oct 11 - 15
	La Carlota City	22	3	4	13,233	Oct 13 - 15
VII	TOTAL	2,616	170	508	886,060	
	Regional Office				3,444	Sept 20 - Oct 15
	Negros Oriental	486	23	64	169,229	Sept 20 - Oct 1
	Bohol	836	52	106	148,798	Sept 20 - Oct 1
	Cebu	869	60	198	290,518	Sept 20 - Oct 1
	Lapu-Lapu City	43	4	22	39,393	Sept 27 - Oct 5
	Cebu City	67	10	38	97,455	Sept 27 - Oct 8
	Dumaguete City	18	2	6	11,319	Sept 29 - Oct 1
	Tagbilaran City	16	1	5	11,751	Oct 4 - 6
	Siquijor	56	3	14	12,140	Oct 4 - 8
	Toledo City	48	4	12	23,474	Oct 4 - 8
	Bais City	35	2	5	15,824	Oct 11 - 13
	Danao City	39	3	9	12,278	Oct 11 - 13
	Bayawan City	47	2	10	20,912	Oct 13 - 15
	Talisay City	20	2	9	16,020	Oct 13 - 15
	Tanjay City	36	2	10	13,505	Oct 13 - 15
VIII	TOTAL	2,848	192	352	722,985	
	Regional Office				1,602	Sept 20 - Oct 15
	Eastern Samar	371	25	44	94,370	Sept 20 - Oct 1
	Northern Samar	428	30	52	77,179	Sept 20 - Oct 1
	Samar	491	32	55	74,891	Sept 20 - Oct 1
	Leyte	942	62	111	284,040	Sept 20 - Oct 1
	Southern Leyte	284	17	48	74,634	Sept 27 - Oct 5
	Calbayog City	107	7	10	19,012	Oct 4 - 6
	Ormoc City	74	4	8	24,980	Oct 4 - 6
	Tacloban City	34	6	8	35,377	Oct 6 - 8
	Biliran	117	9	16	36,900	Oct 11 - 15
GRAND TOTAL- ZONE 4		7,951	551	1,341	3,398,085	
IX	TOTAL	1,838	114	274	655,414	
	Regional Office				1,365	Oct 18 - Nov 15
	Zamboanga del Norte	569	35	83	139,786	Oct 18 - 29
	Dapitan City	48	5	9	14,060	Oct 18 - 22
	Zamboanga del Sur	559	32	71	160,663	Oct 18 - 29
	Dipolog City	36	4	9	23,717	Oct 25 - 29
	Zamboanga Sibugay	369	16	52	123,123	Nov 2 - 15
	Pagadian City	60	5	14	34,742	Nov 2 - 08
	Zamboanga City	163	12	30	136,179	Nov 2 - 15
	Isabela City	34	5	6	21,779	Nov 9 - 15

	Region/Division	No. of Recipient Elem.	No. of School Districts	No. of High Schools	GRAND TOTAL TX/TM/LP	Delivery Schedule
X	TOTAL	1,832	132	227	715,307	
	Regional Office				2,100	Oct 18 - Nov 15
	Misamis Oriental	351	24	45	131,522	Oct 18 - 29
	Lanao del Norte	236	24	26	80,636	Oct 21 - Nov 4
	Cagayan de Oro City	67	9	24	89,378	Oct 26 - Nov 4
	Misamis Occidental	263	15	21	48,256	Oct 28 - Nov 11
	Oroquieta City	41	4	7	14,073	Oct 28 - Nov 11
	Bukidnon	476	21	38	154,326	Nov 2 - 15
	Malaybalay City	57	3	5	29,171	Nov 2 - 15
	Valencia City	51	4	2	26,193	Nov 2 - 15
	Iligan City	76	13	23	64,290	Nov 2 - 15
	Gingoog City	67	4	9	20,353	Nov 4 - 8
	Ozamiz City	42	4	10	24,551	Nov 9 - 11
	Tangub City	51	3	8	14,081	"Nov 09 - 11 (Dist.); Oct 28 - Nov 11 (HS)"
	Camiguin	54	4	9	16,377	Nov 9 - 15
XI	TOTAL	1,474	93	240	754,027	
	Regional Office				3,120	Oct 18 - Nov 15
	Davao del Norte	147	9	31	71,236	Oct 18 - 29
	Island City of Samal	47	3	10	17,354	Oct 18 - 29
	Digos City	33	3	3	32,980	Oct 19 - 21
	Panabo City	42	3	7	27,398	Oct 20 - 22
	Compostela Valley	292	13	43	124,805	Oct 21 - Nov 4
	Davao del Sur	321	20	39	110,196	Oct 25 - Nov 8
	Tagum City	31	3	7	39,598	Oct 27 - 29
	Davao Oriental	290	19	42	99,928	Oct 29 - Nov 12
	Davao City	271	20	58	227,412	Nov 2 - 15
XII	TOTAL	1,377	112	264	695,584	
	Regional Office				1,125	Oct 18 - Nov 15
	Cotabato	470	37	106	206,311	Oct 18 - 29
	Sarangani	195	8	25	76,356	Oct 20 - 28
	Kidapawan City	46	5	13	27,318	Oct 21 - 25
	South Cotabato	249	16	38	111,670	Oct 25 - Nov 8
	Sultan Kudarat	271	25	44	98,933	Oct 27 - Nov 10
	Tacurong City	24	5	5	17,895	Oct 27 - Nov 10
	General Santos City	57	8	21	87,032	Nov 2 - 10
	Cotabato City	24	5	8	39,283	Nov 9 - 11
	Koronadal City	41	3	4	29,661	Nov 11 - 15
XIII	TOTAL	1,430	100	238	471,463	
	Regional Office				1,257	Oct 18 - Nov 15
	Agusan del Norte	171	13	29	55,002	Oct 18 - 29
	Surigao del Norte	238	18	47	67,526	Oct 20 - Nov 3
	Butuan City	98	9	16	55,235	Oct 22 - 28
	Agusan del Sur	379	19	50	127,121	Oct 25 - Nov 8
	Surigao City	63	4	14	19,290	Oct 27 - 29
	Surigao del Sur	335	22	54	99,783	Oct 29 - Nov 12
	Siargao	103	11	18	23,323	Nov 2 - 15
	Bislig City	43	4	10	22,926	Nov 11 - 15
ARMM	TOTAL			98	106,290	
	Regional Office				633	Oct 18 - Nov 15
	Tawi-Tawi			19	20,087	Oct 18 - 29
	Sulu			27	29,283	Oct 25 - Nov 8
	Basilan			22	14,662	Nov 2 - 15
	Maguindanao			30	41,625	Nov 2 - 15

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Miriam: Include all reclaimed lands in probe

By Michael Lim Ubac

NOW SEN. Miriam Defensor-Santiago wants the Senate inquiry on the Smokey Mountain project to include all lands reclaimed from Manila Bay.

Santiago yesterday told reporters that the chamber should also look into the legality of the transfer of reclaimed land to the taipans—the Tan Yu Group of Companies, Henry Sy and John Gokongwei—and even the Catholic Church.

She said her claim of the illegality of such transactions was based on the constitutional provision that "private corporations or associations may not hold such alienable land of the public domain, except by lease."

Santiago said that instead of imposing new taxes, President Macapagal-Arroyo should help recover all reclaimed lands sold or leased to private corporations without an enabling law.

She said this would help raise revenues for the cash-strapped administration.

According to Santiago, the "principle of retroactive invalidity" applies to all reclaimed land.

"Hence, the state should rescind the contracts involved and recover the lands from the present owners or lessees, or allow the lessees to stay, provided that Congress passes an enabling law for each transaction," she said.

Santiago said it was wrong for the government to agree to contracts allowing a corporation to own or lease reclaimed lands.

"The Constitution expressly provides that the state owns all reclaimed lands, and so it should not merely receive a certain percentage of the profits but a much bigger amount, as payment for the leasehold," she said.

The senator dismissed former President Fidel Ramos' remark that she had been fed the wrong information by people with a private agenda.

She said her privilege speech on the Smokey Mountain project was based on information provided by "confidential informants." *With a report from Christine O. Avendaño*

Smokey Mountain agreement terminated in August last year

From page A1

the way for a public bidding on the unfinished work at the Smokey Mountain project.

The memorandum of agreement effectively terminated the original contract, as well as various agreements dated Feb. 21, 1994; Aug. 11, 1994; March 24, 1998, and Nov. 19, 2001.

FVR approval

The original contract and two amended agreements were approved by then President Fidel V. Ramos. The 1998 supplemental agreement was signed during his administration and endorsed to his successor, President Joseph Estrada.

Another supplemental agreement was amended during the first term of Ms Arroyo.

On Aug. 5, lawyer Francisco Chavez asked the Supreme Court to void the original agreement on grounds that it was illegal for a private corporation to acquire public land, in this case 79 hectares of foreshore and submerged land near the former dump.

Taking off on Chavez's petition, Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago said the Ramos administration had made various government agencies pour P3.1 billion into the project that should have been solely shouldered by R-II Builders.

Santiago had said Ramos, among others, could be held liable for malversation of funds.

Chasing the money

Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas yesterday said her department, specifically the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, had yet to fully recover its investment in the Smokey Mountain project.

"The principal is back with us," she said. "We're following up the interest. That should be a fairly big amount of money since that money has not gotten interest since 1995."

The Owwa reportedly shelled out about P835 million for the project.

Sto. Tomas said that she had already ordered an investigation of the transaction, and that this had led to the removal of Wilhelm Soriano from the top Owwa post.

"The problem was not so much that it was anomalous but that it was done without any board decision," said Sto. Tomas, referring to Soriano's actions.

"You can't invest the money of a trust fund just on the say-so of the [Owwa] administrator ... because you [might] put it in endeavors that don't deserve to have the investment," she said.

In a separate interview, current Owwa Administrator Virgilio Angelo said the agency had so far recovered P500 million in cash from Home Insurance Guarantee Corp.

He said the agency still had about P600 million in collectibles, which would be in the form of securities issued by the HIGC.

Angelo said the Owwa had also taken steps "to avoid similar investments in the future."

He said the Smokey Mountain project had tied up much of the Owwa fund, a trust fund used to finance projects and benefits for overseas Filipino workers.

"What happened was, the bad publicity turned it into a sour investment. And the effect [of the investment] was that you don't have liquid funds that you can use for projects," Angelo said, adding:

"We hope that next time when we invest, it would be in liquid [assets] and not in real estate where the risks are big."

All agreements superseded

As stated, the memorandum of agreement "contains the entire agreement between the NHA and the developer (R-II Builders) and supersedes any and all agreements between them."

The document also traces the series of contracts and amendments from the Ramos administration to the present.

The proposed joint venture agreement under the Aquino administration, which initiated the project, had envisioned a P3-billion housing and development project with 40 hectares of reclaimed land to be paid to the developer.

This was modified during the Ramos administration into a P6-billion project, to include temporary housing units for 3,000 squatter families. The floor area of the permanent housing units was adjusted from 20 to 32 square meters, thus doubling the cost.

To make up for the funding, the proposed reclamation area was increased to 79 hectares.

The Estrada administration reviewed the project, and later approved an amended contract increasing the reclamation area to 150 hectares.

In August 2001, the Arroyo administration upheld the Estrada administration's amendments to the agreement, and pegged the total project cost at P8 billion.

But two years later, it canceled the contract.

Escheat proceedings

Sen. Richard Gordon said the Arroyo administration should initiate escheat proceedings to take back the reclaimed land from R-II Builders to prevent further losses to the government.

Speaking at a press conference, Gordon said the state had the inherent right to get back property that belonged to it.

In the days of old, escheat referred to the return to the English Crown or to the feudal lord the landholdings of a person who had died without an heir. It has since been associated with the return of land to the state.

But Gordon clarified that the government could not take property without "just compensation." Thus, he said, the developer should be reimbursed for all expenses.

But it is unclear whether R-II Builders should be entitled to reimbursement given Santiago's claim that Ramos had authorized the NHA to pay Romero P3 billion to reclaim the land, "and then gave the reclaimed land" to him.

Santiago had said the arrangement was "executed in favor of a corporation, which has resulted in huge losses to the government."

"This is not just graft and corruption spelled out in neon lights; this is sheer, cold-blooded wickedness."

Commenting on Santiago's remarks, Gordon said she should also go after those who had advised Ramos to pursue the project. ***With reports from Dona Z. Pazzibugan and Michael Lim Ubac***

Rare bird found on Babuyan isle

From page A1

Residents of Calayan said that the bird was locally known as "*piding*" and that they had even caught it for food in the past but they were unaware it was an unknown species.

The joint team of Filipino and British researchers scoured Calayan, which is 70 kilometers north of Luzon and can only be reached by boat, for months before finding the creature.

Oliveros said his group, the Wild Bird Club of the Philippines, had checked with international experts at the Birdlife International, and learned that this species had never been recorded before.

He said that while the new species was "apparently not under immediate threat," its limited distribution made it vulnerable to habitat loss and predators introduced to the island, such as cats and rats.

Rails are a type of ground-feeding, ground-nesting birds with straight, pointed bills.

Filipino wildlife biologist Carmela Española made the discovery in May when she spotted a group of unfamiliar birds foraging in the undergrowth as she was walking through the rainforest.

Calayan is still largely covered by rainforest. It was last visited by ornithologists in 1903, according to Dr. Richard Thomas of BirdLife.

Isolation

Biologist Genevieve Broad, co-leader of the Filipino-British expedition, said isolation had protected the species from human encroachment.

"The island is 186 square kilometers and has only 8,500 people who are concentrated in one town in the south. There are few people in the middle of the island [where the birds are found] because there aren't any roads," she said.

Isolation has also proved disastrous for flightless birds in the past. Many that evolved on remote islands with no predators have become what biologists term "ecologically naive"—meaning they do not recognize danger from other animals.

So when humans first arrived on small islands in the past, they found the flightless birds to be easy sources of protein and often wiped them out—with the dodo of the Indian Ocean island of Mauritius being the most famous.

Most of the 22 species of rail which have become extinct since 1600 were flightless. Of the 20 living species of flightless rail, 18 are considered to be threatened.

"The Calayan rail is a relative of the internationally familiar moorhen, with bright red beak and legs contrasting sharply with its dark plumage," BirdLife said in a statement. "But unlike its familiar relative, the Calayan rail is flightless, or nearly so, and found only on the small island after which it is named."

At risk from humans

"I find it quite unusual," said Oliveros. "Most species have been documented, but this shows there is still a lot to be revealed to us. There may be other islands that have been overlooked by scientists."

The team estimated that there were 100-200 pairs of rails in Calayan.

"These newly discovered species are nearly always at risk from human influence, because most are on islands or mountains where their ranges are naturally quite small," BirdLife's Nigel Collar was quoted as saying.

Oliveros agreed.

"Flightless birds are the most vulnerable. Based on a history of extinction, its future doesn't look that bright," he said. ***Inquirer wires***

DENR test for metro air quality: Check your collar

From page A1

every blessed day, were given two conflicting scenarios yesterday.

Check the inside of your collar, said Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun. There's less grime there than it used to catch, because the air is "cleaner" now. She had a well-funded study to back up this claim.

On the other hand, word from the health department is that the air over the capital is just not safe. It quoted its own study, which noted an increase in the number of respiratory cases over the past year.

All right, Gozun said during a press forum at the Traders Hotel in Manila: Air quality was "not yet clean enough," but it had undergone "significant improvements" in the last decade. "You may recall how easily your collar got soiled back then. That's no longer the case."

The forum discussed a research funded by Asian Development Bank to assess the impact of air quality on public health.

Speaking of which, health officials presented a 2002-2003 study that listed air pollution among the causes of 300 "excess" cases of asthma, 19 "excess" cases of chronic bronchitis, 200 "excess" cases of respiratory ailments, and 40 cases of cardio vascular diseases.

In the same, uh, breath, the Public Monitoring Study of the Metro Manila Air Quality Improvement Sector Program recorded 330 "excess" deaths due to respiratory ailments, 200 "excess" deaths because of cardiovascular diseases, and another 390 "excess" deaths attributable to air pollution.

Optimistic

"Excess" refers to incidence on top of the "usual number," triggered by the increase in total suspended particulates (TSP) per cubic meter of air. According to the DOH study, any increase immediately translates to "excess" afflictions and deaths.

Gozun offered the "collar test" when the INQUIRER asked for visible indicators of improved air quality. She was optimistic, explaining that in 2003, the year-round summary of daily TSP monitoring showed that the highest levels recorded was 508 micrograms in Valuenzuela, and 476 micrograms over Congressional Road in Quezon City.

That was just "two times higher" that the standard set by the 1999 Clean Air Act—230 micrograms per cubic meter—she said, pointing out that in 1991, it was "five times higher."

The DENR chief attributed the improvement partly to better-quality vehicle fuel now being used. Relative to this, she also cited the beneficial effects of requiring vehicles to pass emission tests prior to registration, as well as aggressive roadside apprehension of smoke-belching vehicles.

This piece of good news seemed lost on the DOH, whose document tagged motor vehicles as the major source of pollution. Besides, it was focused on coughs and wheezing more than cleaner collars.

Out of the 6,000 respondents that consisted of children aged six to 10 and adults aged 18 to 64, the DOH said, frequent cough was reported in 31.8 per cent of the kids in "high exposure" areas, and 26.5 percent of those in "medium exposure" areas. Respiratory ailment symptoms were described as "prevalent" in the adults.

Covering seven cities and municipalities in Metro Manila, the study identified Caloocan, Valenzuela and Quezon City as "high exposure areas." Taguig, Pateros and Pasig were labeled "medium exposure" areas. Antipolo was the only area considered "low exposure."

The DOH study concluded: "The result of the ambient air quality assessment indicate that coarse and particulate matter and tropospheric ozone pose considerable health risks to the population in Metro Manila."

Whatever that means, exactly, it doesn't smell good.

NPA set to free 2 soldiers today

From page A1

"I feel I can even walk miles just to see him," Leah gushed.

A feeling that her husband's release was imminent seized Leah yesterday when she woke up to the sight of a military officer at the doorsteps of her and her husband's quarters in Fort Bonifacio, Makati.

The officer had come to fetch her for a brief medical examination at the camp hospital.

It didn't take more than 10 minutes before a military doctor broke the news to her: She is fit to trek through the rugged terrain of Bicol to personally receive her husband from his captors.

Bible is waiting

At Camp Aguinaldo, Nemeño's older brother, Mariano, was just as excited.

He had arrived there in the morning after receiving word that Ronel might be released soon. He had with him a bag stuffed with newly pressed pants and shirt for his brother. Also inside the bag was the Bible he had promised to give him upon his release.

Leah said she would probably leave behind her first-born, Alliyah Nicole. The daughter caught a minor cold after spending a rather lonely second birthday on Monday. The government had failed to secure her father's release in time for the birthday.

But it was with a hint of warning that Communist Party of the Philippines spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal announced the expected release of the two soldiers.

Not the last captives

Rosal said the two Army soldiers would not be the last captives of the revolutionary movement.

"With the intensified people's protracted war, more enemy personnel would surely fall into the hands of the revolutionary forces," he said in a statement. "We also expect mass defections from the reactionary armed forces in the years to come."

In his statement announcing the scheduled release of Fidelino and Nemeño, Rosal said the NPA Romulo Jallores Command in Bicol would free them today "as long as the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) strictly comply with the suspension of offensive military and police operations ordered by Malacañang and the Department of National Defense."

Invitation by e-mail

The CPP information bureau sent an e-mailed invitation to media organizations and individuals interested in covering the turnover of the "prisoners of war" to the government and their relatives.

Bureau spokesperson Anne Buenaventura asked those who would come from Albay to assemble near the Cagsawa Ruins in Daraga, Albay at 9 a.m. sharp.

Self-exiled CPP founder Jose Maria Sison extended his "best wishes" to the two soldiers and their families.

"May they enjoy their reunion and look forward to a better future for their country," Sison said in an e-mailed reply to the INQUIRER.

Maj. Gen. John Bolhayon, commanding officer of 9th Infantry Brigade based in Camp Canuto, Pili, Camarines Sur, refused to comment on his two men's release.

Bolhayon said there had been a previous reported schedule of release of the two soldiers but this did not push through because the rebels had accused the military of conducting operations in the area.

"But look, we're the ones being harassed," Bolhayon said, referring to the "harassment" of an Army detachment in Lupi, Camarines Sur, on Friday night, when the NPA reportedly fired at the soldiers, wounding one of them.

Humane treatment

Sison said that the two captives were supposed to have been released several months ago but the government delayed the issuance of orders suspending military and police offensives.

He said Fidelino and Nemeño were "uniformed soldiers captured in the course of combat."

"Thus, in captivity, they were treated leniently in accordance with the NPA rules, the Guide for Establishing the People's Government, the Geneva Conventions and the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL)."

Fidelino and Nemeño were captured during an encounter on March 1 in Tinambac town, Camarines Sur.

An agreement for suspension of military and police operations in Camarines Sur and Albay on July 27 was supposed to have paved the way for the soldiers' release on Aug. 7 but the NPA canceled it due to alleged military operations.

Rosal warned of a possible cancellation of the release if the AFP violated the cease-fire order.

He said that the NPA had received reports of continuing military operations in Lupi, Camarines Sur and Oas, Albay.

Lectured on revolution

Col. Ramon Santos, 901st Infantry Brigade commander, denied Rosal's allegations. He said the military would not do anything foolish to derail the freedom of Fidelino and Nemeño.

Rosal urged the two captives to relate to their fellow soldiers, families and friends how well they were treated by the NPA during their captivity.

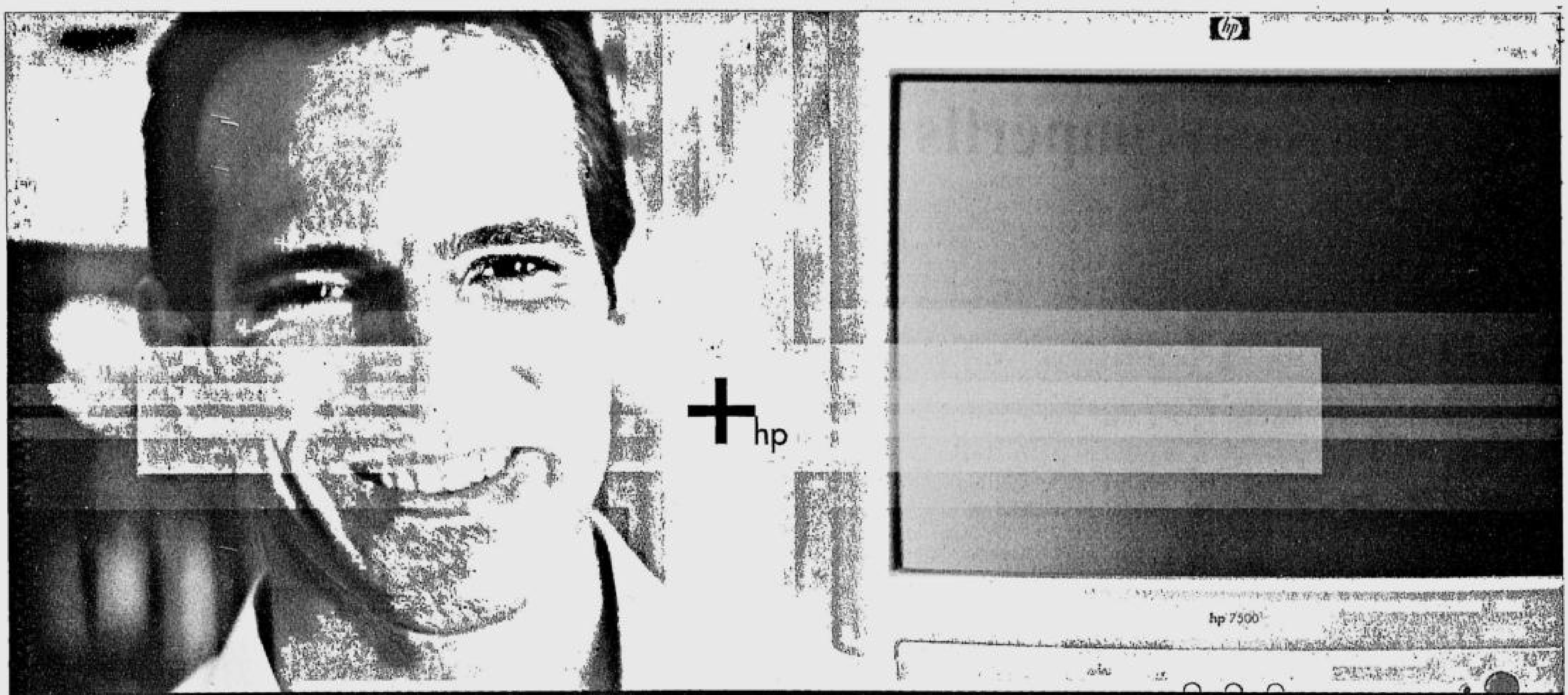
Rosal said that contrary to common perception, the prisoners were not asked or persuaded to join the revolutionary movement.

Leah said she was awaiting word from Silvestre Bello III, the chief government negotiator in the peace process, when she and Nemeño's brother would fly for Bicol.

Shaving kit ready

A bag containing fresh civilian clothes for Fidelino has been ready since late last week. The bag also contains a shaving kit Leah intends to give to her husband as a gift.

"It's all systems go. The release will push through despite the inclement weather," said Rep. Rolando Andaya (LP, Camarines Sur), who brokered the release. ***With a report from Joyce Mejillano, Ronnie Lorejo, Alan Pelayo and Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau and Carlito Pablo***



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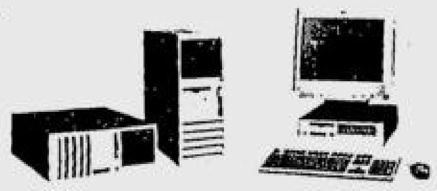

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Tax credit row imperils revenue bills

From page A1

backs were freely transferrable while TCCs were transferable under certain conditions.

Because the TCCs could be easily transferred, a lucrative secondary market developed. Some companies obtained from this secondary market fraudulent TCCs which were sold to them at discounts of 5 to 30 percent, according to an OSS official.

The OSS is run by the staff of the Bureau of Customs, the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Board of Investments. It was created to provide a more speedy and efficient processing of claims for refunds under incentives granted by various laws, including the Omnibus Investments Code of 1987.

The dismissal of the cases prompted some members of the House of Representatives to call for the suspension of finance and customs officials who handled the TCC scandal.

House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles said both the justice and the finance departments should be held responsible for the prosecution's failure to ensure that the tax cheats were properly punished under existing laws.

Rep. Gilbert Remulla (Nacionalista Party, second district, Cavite) was more specific.

Suspend prosecutors

Remulla said that government prosecutors who handled the TCC scam should be immediately suspended and investigated.

"Maybe the Ombudsman should start looking at their statements of assets and liabilities," he said, adding that some of these prosecutors may have deliberately refused to pursue the tax cases in exchange for some favors.

He said that any new tax measure would be useless unless the government could show it was capable of effectively prosecuting tax cheats.

Rep. Jesli Lapus (Nationalist People's Coalition, third district, Tarlac) blamed the dismissal on the BIR and the BOC's negligence to pursue the suits.

Acting Justice Secretary Ma. Merceditas Gutierrez said the Department Justice was not responsible for the government's loss in the tax collection cases.

No prosecutors involved

Gutierrez said at a press conference that it was the BOC that filed and handled these collection cases before the courts.

"So there were no prosecutors involved. These were collection cases handled by the deputy commissioner of the Bureau of Customs," she said.

The DOJ, however is handling 1,032 criminal cases involving tax cheats with some of them being filed either before the Office of the Ombudsman or the Sandiganbayan, Gutierrez said.

She said that these cases involved firms that illegally acquired tax credit certificates and some of them were still under preliminary investigation.

Gutierrez added that the DOJ would pursue these cases and ensure that the tax cheats are convicted.

The Office of the Ombudsman is looking into the tax fraud cases, saying the government officials and businessmen involved in the matter may be liable for plunder charges.

In a telephone interview, Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio, who leads the team of prosecutors out to pin down finance officials and businessman Felix Chingkoe for the P5.3 billion tax credit scam, expressed alarm over the dismissal of the cases.

He said that while the Office of the Ombudsman only filed graft and estafa charges against those involved in the Chingkoe tax credit scam, he said the office may now file plunder charges against those involved in the others cases.

Plunder

"If evidence warrants, we will go all out for plunder," he said, noting that some of the cases involved sums of money higher than the P50 million threshold for the filing of plunder charges.

The case against Pilipinas Shell, for example, involved P197 million, while the one filed against Integrated Multi-Cotton involved P147 million.

He said he was coordinating with Finance Undersecretary Emmanuel Bonoan, head of the Department of Finance's Revenue Integrity Protection Service, the group that is tasked with investigating revenue officers involved in such irregularities.

One of the officials implicated in the alleged scam was Deputy Customs Commissioner Gil Valera who, as head of the BOC's Revenue Collection Monitoring Group, had been tasked with initiating recovery efforts by filing and prosecuting civil collections cases.

In a telephone interview with the INQUIRER, Valera denied having neglected the prosecution of the cases in the courts, resulting in their dismissal.

"It's very clear that the reason they were dismissed was because the firms were using fictitious names and addresses," he said. "As for the others, when we searched for their stockholders, dummies were used or the persons with spurious identities were listed as stockholders."

"With that stalemate, how can we go after people who are no longer existing and their whereabouts can no longer be established?" he said.

Still, Valera said he had asked the Special Presidential Task Force 156 to go after those involved, but he raised doubts whether they could unmask the stockholders, considering that most of them are dummies.

Mishandled

Taking the floor shortly after the session began, Enrile asked the ways and means committee led by Sen. Ralph Recto to look into "why the cases were allowed to be mishandled by functionaries in government."

He said the blue ribbon committee could also join in the investigation as he underscored the need to pursue the people responsible and send them to jail.

"It's about time that we send to the gallows if possible crooks in our society who are adding to their wealth by cheating the government out of its revenues," Enrile said.

In an extemporaneous speech, Enrile said he got the same report of the dismissal of the cases the other day and that he was "shocked" by the outcome. He also said he was shocked that government was moving to settle the cases.

"What is surprising is why they split the criminal and civil cases," Enrile also said.

He said at one point that officials were inutile and incompetent.

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago stood up to ask Enrile to comment on reports that the government lost the cases because it did not have enough prosecutors.

But Enrile said that he had not seen any indication that the government lacked prosecutors as he asked why it allowed this to happen.

"It seems to be the secretary of finance was lax as well," he said at one point.

Santiago also called for the chamber to investigate the matter. *With reports from Philip C. Tubeza and Gil Cabacungan Jr.*

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Valera denies there was 'lack of interest to prosecute'

By Michelle V. Remo

DEPUTY Customs Commissioner Gil Valera denied there was "lack of interest to prosecute" on the part of the Bureau of Customs, adding that the cases were dismissed because of technical reasons.

The BOC was the prosecutor for the dismissed cases involving about P1 billion, while the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) was the prosecutor in one case, which involved over P600 million in lost taxes.

But Valera said the dismissed cases numbered only 14 and not 15.

He explained to reporters that out of 14 respondents, eight were original recipients of TCCs and the remaining six were transferees, or buyers of TCCs that had been issued to an original recipient.

Valera explained that the six cases were dismissed because the court said they used the TCCs "in good faith," not knowing that the TCCs they bought were fraudulent. The remaining eight cases were dismissed, he explained, because the respondents used fictitious addresses and the court's summons did not reach them.

Valera said the BOC would just refile the 14 dismissed cases, and try to locate the respondents of the eight cases who used fictitious addresses. "We hope they did not use fictitious names," he said.

For its part, the BIR said it would file a motion for reconsideration with the Court of Tax Appeals once the revenue agency receives the dismissal order from the court.

"We have not yet received the order, but we will refile the case with the CTA as soon as we receive it," said Deputy Commissioner Kim Henares of the BIR.

Henares said that while the BOC was alleged to have exercised disinterest in prosecuting its cases, the BIR could not be accused of the same because its prosecution team was "very active" in pursuing the cases and attending the hearings.

The Special Presidential Task Force 156, which Malacañang created to pursue cases of fraudulent use of TCCs, is washing its hands of the reported dismissal of the cases.

"On our own, we cannot prosecute because our main task is to investigate and recommend the filing of criminal and collection cases. Under the law, it is within the jurisdiction of the BIR and the BOC to file the cases with the courts and prosecute," said Alan Ventura, executive director of the task force.

Ventura reiterated that the BIR and the BOC should be the ones prosecuting because the fraudulent TCCs were used to get tax credits from the two government agencies.

Ventura said it had been religiously doing its task of investigating cases of tax fraud, noting that in the last two months the task force had already recommended to the Office of the Ombudsman 432 criminal cases of tax credit fraud involving over P500 million in lost taxes.

Ventura said the task force had recommended to the Department of Finance that the BIR and the BOC be asked to explain why the cases were dismissed. He said Finance Undersecretary Inocencio Ferrer Jr. had told the BIR and the BOC yesterday to submit a written report on the cases, including an explanation of how they pursued the cases.

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BOC exec not new to controversy

From page A1

Deputy Customs Commissioner Gil A. Valera was slapped in March with a six-month suspension by the Office of the Ombudsman for engaging in an illegal deal with a firm that owed the government P37,195,859 in customs duties and taxes.

Ombudsman investigators stumbled upon the P37-million scam while looking into Valera's statement of assets and liabilities. His net worth grew by P1.2 million in 2001-P2002.

Valera, head of the BOC's revenue collection and monitoring group, was accused of entering into a "compromise agreement" with Steel Asia Manufacturing Corp., which reportedly paid P37 million in duties and taxes with the use of "fake, spurious and counterfeit" TCCs.

Later, it was found that Valera had no authority to enter into such a deal.

But Valera managed to fight off his suspension when he raised the matter to the Court of Appeals. He succeeded in getting the court to declare that the suspension was out of order. The Office of the Ombudsman has appealed the ruling.

But seeing Valera's name in the news again, sources at the Office of the Ombudsman said there appeared to be a pattern to Valera's approach in dealing with tax cheats.

"It appears that rather than work to get payment from tax cheats, he is fond of filing cases against them in court, many of which end up being dismissed for lack of interest on the part of the prosecution," a source said.

Penchant for settlement

A graft investigator also pointed to Valera's penchant for a 20-percent settlement, instead of the full payment, of the amount owed the government.

Following the compromise settlement, Valera is also believed to put into court records that the respondents "acted in good faith," thus freeing them of criminal liabilities.

"What I find very suspicious is how he delays the prosecution of the case when he needs to prosecute them immediately, considering the huge amount of funds involved," said a senior official of the Office of the Ombudsman, who asked not to be named. "I also find it odd that he does not file a motion for reconsideration after a case is dismissed."

Contacted by the INQUIRER, Valera denied the charges, saying that his team had pursued the cases, but its efforts proved futile because many of the firms involved in the alleged TCC scam were dummies and their board of trustees fictitious.

He said he was not inclined to go for the settlement of cases involving tax credit cheats.

In the Steel Asia case, Valera initially charged the firm in a Manila Regional Trial Court with a "a civil case for collection of money with damages." He asked the court to issue a "writ of preliminary attachment" against the firm's assets in 2001.

No authority

Later, when the court was about to go after the firm's assets, Valera stopped the seizure by presenting to the court a "Joint Motion for the Approval of a Compromise Agreement" he had signed with Antonio Lorenzana, president of Steel Asia Manufacturing. In the agreement, the firm agreed to pay its tax liability by installment from Jan. 28, 2002 to June 28, 2004.

But upon investigation, it was found that the deal was done without authority from then Customs Commissioner Antonio Bernardo, contrary to law.

In his July 23, 2003 certification, Bernardo denied authorizing Valera to enter into a compromise agreement with the firm on behalf of the Bureau of Customs.

The Tariff and Customs Code provides that only the customs commissioner, subject to the approval of the secretary of finance, may enter into a compromise agreement with any party to a case.

Thus, the Office of the Ombudsman said that it was clear that Valera "may have exceeded the bounds of his appointment when he signed" the compromise agreement.

"The compromise agreement is made more deplorable by the fact that respondent may have made concessions that may be deemed highly injurious to the interest of the government," Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo said in his order suspending Valera.

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Aguilar nephew nabbed in Zambo

By Leila B. Salaverria, Martin P. Marfil and Luige del Puerto

BECAUSE an alert navy captain remembered his name from news reports, authorities thwarted an alleged attempt of a 22-year-old Filipino-American who figured in a road accident that killed a Malacañang official, to leave the country for Malaysia on Monday.

Jason Aguilar Ivler was arrested by agents of the National Bureau of Investigation's Western Mindanao Regional Office and the Bureau of Immigration on board the MV Lady Maryjoy 2 as it was about to sail from Zamboanga City for Sandakan, Malaysia.

Immigration officials said police who acted as Ivler's escorts initially refused to turn over the youth to them, but relented when National Bureau of Investigation agents told the group that Ivler was the subject of a hold-departure order.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco and BI commissioner Alipio Fernandez presented Ivler before the media yesterday.

Ivler had an outstanding arrest warrant issued by the Pasig Metropolitan Trial Court, but was able to post bail. He was released from NBI custody yesterday afternoon. A hold departure order had earlier been issued against him.

Ivler was at the wheel of a Toyota Prado that had collided with the Isuzu Trooper driven by Undersecretary Nestor Ponce Jr., Presidential Assistant for Resettlement at the C-5/Ortigas flyover in Pasig City on Aug. 8. Ponce died in the accident, while his wife Evangeline and Ivler were injured.

The young man's mother, Marlene, a sister of singer Freddie Aguilar and the wife of an Asian Development Bank official, yesterday said her son had been receiving death threats.

Because of the threats, the family said it was forced to post guards on a 24-hour watch for Ivler, a psychology student at the Hawaii Pacific University who is here on vacation.

JASON Ivler, nephew of singer Freddie Aguilar, is presented to media by NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco after he was turned over by agents of the Bureau of Immigration who caught him while apparently trying to slip out of the country.
ERIK ARAZAS

Marlene added that her son did not escape from the police guarding him at the Asian Hospital in Muntinlupa City, where he was treated for injuries.

Ivler's lawyer Joseph Sagandoy, however, said he did not know about his client's plan to go to Malaysia.

Ivler was nabbed on Monday afternoon after ship Capt. Joseph Tobias remembered reading about Ivler in the newspapers, and became suspicious of the actions of Supt. Antonio Gumiran, allegedly from Camp Crame's directorate for operations.

Gumiran reportedly asked the inspecting team not to disturb his friend (Ivler) who was resting inside the ship's cabin. Gumiran allegedly gave Ivler's passport to authorities for stamping later, and asked that the young man's name be excluded from the ship's list of foreign passengers.

His suspicions aroused, Tobias called the immigration office in Zamboanga City to check out Ivler's name in the hold list. Upon confirmation, immigration officer Jakaria Madlahuddin and two marines boarded the ship and asked Gumiran to surrender Ivler. Instead, Gumiran allegedly offered $5,000 to the officials in return for letting Ivler go.

Two other police officers allegedly tasked to escort Ivler to Malaysia had disembarked when Ivler was arrested. One of them was identified as Sr. Insp. Jeff Briones-Uy, while the other was described as "someone who spoke Tausug."

Philippine National Police spokesperson Chief Supt. Joel Goltiao said they were still verifying the identities of the police officers.

Ivler is facing charges of reckless imprudence resulting in homicide, damage to property, and slight physical injuries.

In a statement sent to the INQUIRER yesterday, the ADB said that as an institution, it enjoys certain privileges and immunities on the basis of the Headquarters Agreement with the Philippine government.

"However, Mr. Ivler, as a dependent of an ADB staff member, does not enjoy diplomatic immunity," the statement said.

Ivler is the stepson of an ADB official.

"ADB is aware of the tragic accident which occurred on 8 August that resulted in the death of Undersecretary Nestor Ponce Jr. We can confirm that Mr. Jason Ivler, a dependent of an ADB Staff member was involved in the accident," the statement said. "However, ADB considers this to be a personal matter between the parties concerned and ADB is not directly involved," it added.

Slain teller's parents sue condo execs

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE PARENTS of bank teller Candice Castro have brought their search for justice to the place where their daughter was murdered.

Rogelio and Grace Castro have filed a P1.3-million civil suit against WAJ Realty Development Inc., the firm that owns the Vellagio Tower on Leon Guinto Street, Malate, Manila.

In the suit filed before the Manila Regional Trial Court, the Castros said that the company was lax in securing the building, where their daughter had been staying for more than a month before she was killed.

"The horrible killing of our daughter was directly brought about by the gross negligence of the defendant," said the Castros.

5 die as wall falls in Rizal

By Luige del Puerto

THE IMMEDIATE response of neighbors saved two children who were among seven people buried when a wall collapsed on two houses yesterday in San Mateo, Rizal, the police said.

Their companions, identified as Mario and Dolores Aresta, Luzviminda Alde, 29; Midden Llovido, and year-old. Mark Victor Llovido, failed to make it out the rubble.

Neighbors frantically dug into ruins of the collapsed structure and pulled out alive Maridel Llovido, 2, and Miko Aresta, 4, when the wall collapsed at about 3 a.m. inside the Dayot Compound, Phase 4, Montery Hills, Barangay Silangan.

Heavy rains and the darkness of the area prevented rescuers from reaching the five victims on time. Their bodies were recovered an hour later, the police said.

The police believed the riprap that helped hold the wall in place gave way, causing an erosion of the soil that eventually led to the wall's collapse.

A riprap is a wall made of stones and is usually used to prevent slopes or creeks from eroding.

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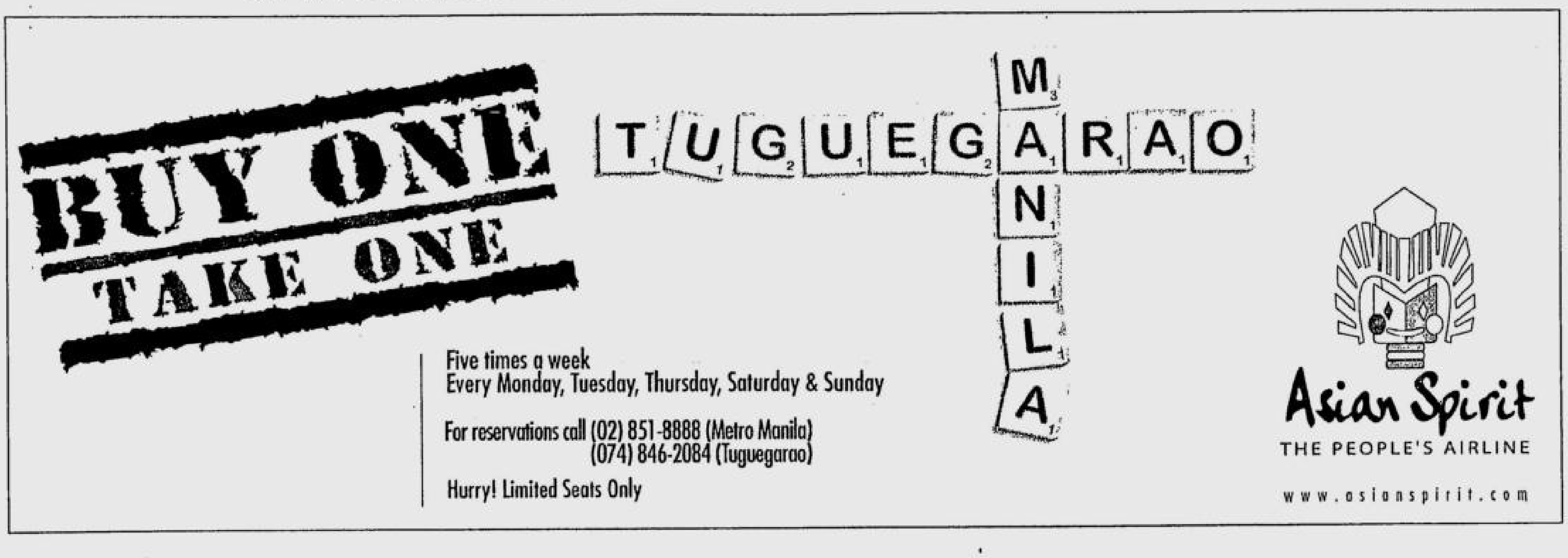

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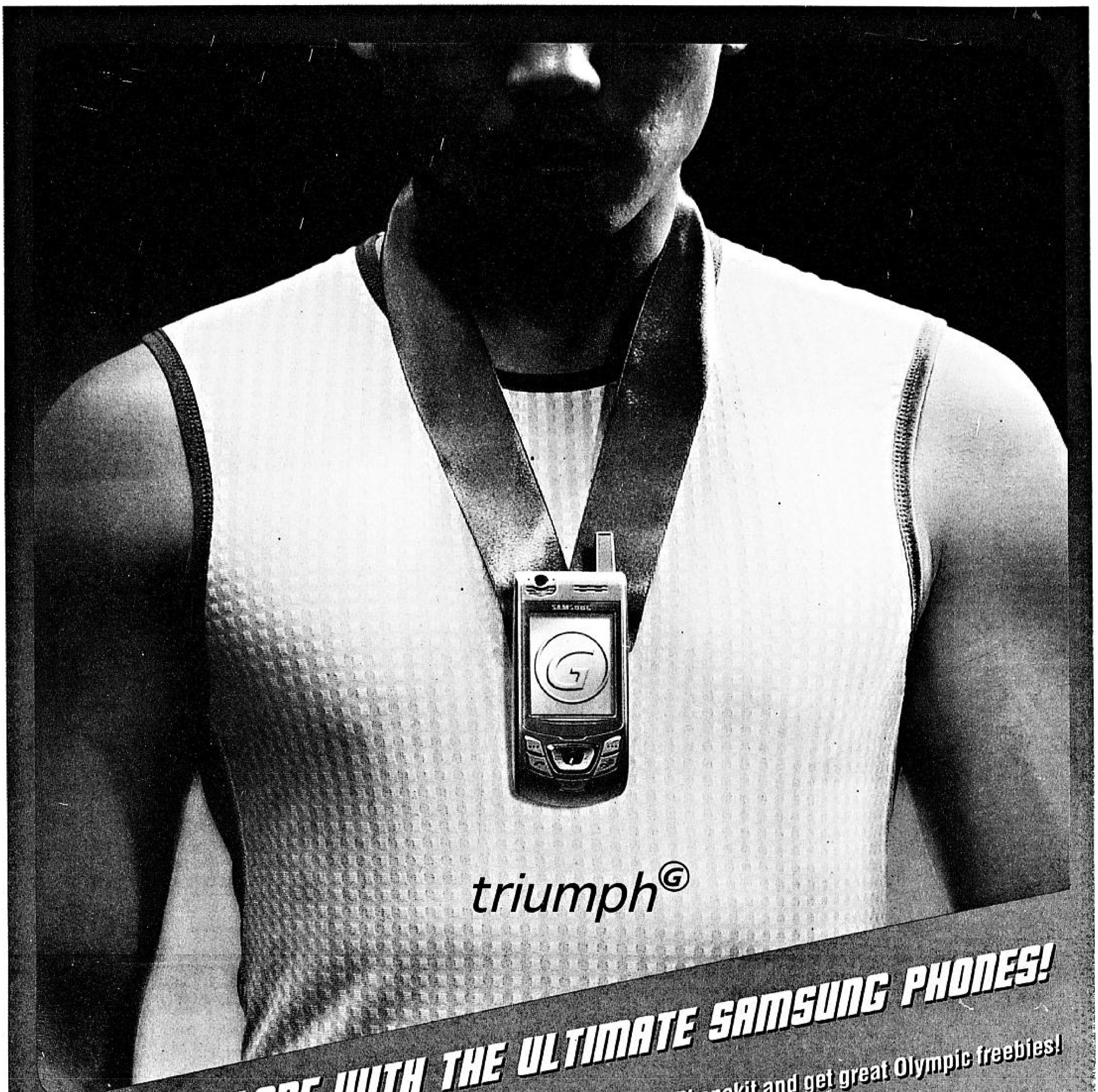

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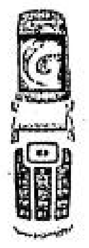

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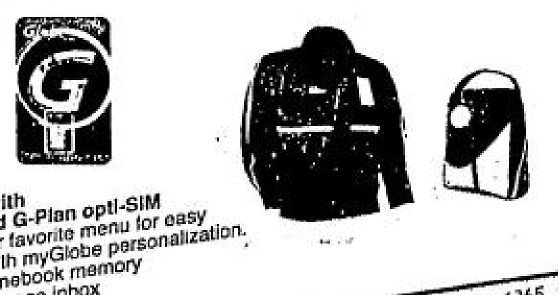

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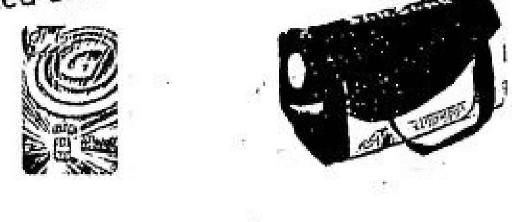

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SPORTS TV
Compiled by L. Mangulat

GOLF: US Amateur Championship; tomorrow at 1 a.m.; ESPN—The first round tees off from New York.

BASKETBALL: NBA Greatest Games—Spurs vs Rockets, Game 6, 1995 Western Finals; 8 a.m. (r-5 p.m.); Solar Sports—See how Hakeem Olajuwon outplayed counterpart David Robinson as Houston dismantled San Antonio to the Finals.

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

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Figueroa goes down fighting

Bows to Spanish deadshot by 2 points; Molina 2nd in heats but fails to progress

By Artemio T. Engracia Jr.
News Editor

ATHENS—The giant-killing run of archer Jasmin Figueroa ended abruptly Tuesday as the arrows ran out on the Filipina's rally in the Round of 32 of the women's individual competition of the 28th Olympic Games here.

The new toast of the archery world, the 19-year-old Filipina went down fighting against world-ranked Almudena Gallardo of Spain at the ancient Panathinaiko Stadium here.

The score was 152-150 with the Filipina falling short on her rally in the final end against the faltering Spaniard. The heartbreaking loss came two days after a stunning upset of former world champion and two-time Olympic medalist Natalia Valeeva of Italy made the diminutive Filipina the sensation of the archery competitions here.

ATHENS 2004

"*Masayang malungkot* (Bittersweet)," said Figueroa after the match.

But no sooner had she released her final arrow of the Olympics than she started looking forward to the next Olympiad in Beijing, where she intends to do better with the lessons she learned from Athens.

"Now I know what it's like to be in the Olympics," Figueroa said in Filipino.

"In the next Olympics, I know what to do."

The arrow-by-arrow score (18 arrows, 70 meters):
FIGUEROA 10 7 7 8 6 10 8 9 10 8 8 8 8 9 10 8 7 9
GALLARDO 9 9 8 9 8 8 8 10 8 9 9 9 8 10 8 9 6 7

Elsewhere in the Games, Miguel Molina was eliminated in the 200-meter breaststroke heats as the Filipinos continued to wallow in disappointment in the swimming competitions at the Olympic Aquatic Center.

Molina finished second in the first heat but wound up 38th overall with a clocking of two minutes and 19.19 seconds. That surpassed his 2:20.81 clocking in the Southeast Asian Games in Hanoi last December.

And flyweight Violito Payla was to fight Uzbekistan's Tulashboy Doniyorov in the first round of the 51-kg division over at the Peristeri Olympic Boxing Hall late Tuesday night.

Figueroa came out of the tunnel under the 23-centuries-old stadium with a reputation as a giant killer and the stadium announcer made sure the crowd at the marble steps would remember that.

The Filipina responded with a perfect 10 on her first arrow, an opening shot that drew the cheers of a handful of Filipino spectators led by sports officials Celso Dayrit, president of the Philippine Olympic Committee, and Eric Buhain, chair of the Philippine Sports Commission.

But the 25-year-old Spaniard, who was already shooting arrows when Figueroa was still in pre-school, was not impressed. She immediately

FIGUEROA/ A26

RP SCHEDULE (All times Manila time)

Wednesday, Aug. 18, 2004

Boxing Peristeri Olympic Boxing Hall
(Light flyweight, 48 kg, Round of 32; 1:15 a.m. Thursday)
Harry Tañamor vs Sherali Dostiev, Tajikistan

Swimming Olympic Aquatic Center
(Women's 200m Breaststroke, Heats; 4:10 p.m.)
Jaclyn Pangilinan
(Men's 200m Individual Medly, Heats; 4:47 p.m.)
Miguel Molina

Thorpe wins race of century A27

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3	Can't Fight The Moonlight	*LeAnn Rimes*	TONE CANTFYT
4	Let's Get It Started	*Black Eyed Peas*	TONE LETSGET
5	Can't Get You Out Of My Head	*Kylie Minogue*	TONE CANTGETU
6	Be With You	*Atomic Kitten*	TONE BEWITH
7	Weapon of Choice	*Fatboy Slim*	TONE WEAPON
8	Breathe	*Prodigy*	TONE BREATHE
9	Get Busy	*Sean Paul*	TONE GETBUSY
10	Milkshake	*Kelis*	TONE MILKSHAKE

POP HITS

1	Twentysomething	*Jamie Cullum*	TONE TWENTYSUMTH
2	My Happy Ending	*Avril Lavigne*	TONE HAPPYEND
3	Breaking The Habit	*Linkin Park*	TONE BREAKHABIT
4	Sunday Morning	*Maroon 5*	TONE SUNDAYMORN
5	Ocean Avenue	*Yellowcard*	TONE OCEANAVE
6	I'm Shakin'	*Rooney*	TONE IMSHAKIN
7	This Love	*Maroon 5*	TONE THISLOVE
8	Everytime	*Britney Spears*	TONE EVERYTIME
9	Anticipation	*Mandy Moore*	TONE ANTICIPATION
10	Don't Tell Me	*Avril Lavigne*	TONE DONTELME

RnB HITS

1	If I Ain't Got You	*Alicia Keys*	TONE AINTGOTU
2	Where Is The Love	*Black Eyed Peas*	TONE WERISLUV
3	Talk About Our Love	*Brandy feat. Kanye West*	TONE TALKABOUT
4	Confessions Pt. 2	*Usher*	TONE CONFPT2
5	Officially Missing You	*Tamia*	TONE OFFICIALLY
6	I Don't Wanna Know	*Mario Winans*	TONE DNTKNOW
7	Fallen	*Mya*	TONE FALLEN2
8	Super Duper Love	*Joss Stone*	TONE SUPRDUPR
9	Beautiful	*Snoop Dogg feat. Pharrell*	TONE BEAUTI
10	Ignition	*R. Kelly*	TONE IGNI

OPM Hits

1	2 Trick Pony	*Sandwich*	TONE 2TRICK
2	Now That I Have You	*The Company*	TONE NOWDATIHAVU
3	Hands To Heaven	*Christian Bautista*	TONE HANDS2HVN
4	Ba't Di Mo Pagbigyan	*King*	TONE BATDIMO
5	Noypi	*Bamboo*	TONE NOYPI
6	Balisong	*Rivermaya*	TONE BALISONG
7	Nananaginip Ng Gising	*Sarah Geronimo*	TONE NANANAGINIP
8	Kung Mahal Mo Sya	*Jay-R*	TONE KUNGMAHAL
9	Long Distance	*Salbakuta*	TONE LONGDISTNCE
10	Before I Let You Go	*Freestyle*	TONE B4ILETUGO

POLYTONES

1	Hands To Heaven	*Christian Bautista*	POLY HANDS2HVN
2	My Happy Ending	*Avril Lavigne*	POLY HAPPYEND
3	Everytime	*Britney Spears*	POLY EVERYTIME
4	Talk About Our Love	*Brandy feat. Kanye West*	POLY TALKABOUT
5	Sunday Morning	*Maroon 5*	POLY SUNDAYMORN
6	If I Ain't Got You	*Alicia Keys*	POLY AINTGOTU
7	Sunrise	*Norah Jones*	POLY SUNRYS
8	Sasakyan	*K & The Boxers*	POLY SASAKYAN
9	Confessions Pt. 2	*Usher*	POLY CONFPT2
10	I Did It For You	*Westlife*	POLY DIDIT4U

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LOGO LABU2
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LOGO HOTKISS
LOGO DRIMIN1
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LOGO CHICKBOY
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PIC LOVEUS
PIC KISSES2
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PIC SWITLUV
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RP pins hopes on Tañamor's fists

By Artemio T. Engracia Jr.

ATHENS—The brightest of the country's faint Olympic medal hopes rides on the fists of Harry Tañamor Wednesday when he climbs the ring for his light flyweight fight in the first round of the boxing competitions at the Peristeri Olympic Boxing Hall here.

Tañamor, the lightest of the four Filipino boxers here at 48 kilograms, is expected to breeze through the initial round against Sherali Dostiev of Tajikistan in a clash scheduled for 8:15 p.m. here (1:15 a.m. Thursday in Manila).

The 27-year-old Filipino has been ranked a potential bronze medalist by the Sports Illustrated in its Olympic preview issue, but his medal hopes face a potential stumbling block in the quarterfinals.

The luck of the draw has put him in the same lower bracket as the division's top favorite, Cuba's Yan Berthelemy. If they both get past the preliminary rounds, they clash in the quarterfinals.

A victory by Tañamor in that round, described by boxing leader Mel Lopez Jr. as the toughest in Olympic boxing, would assure him of a medal.

"If Tañamor wins in the quarterfinals, he could go all the way to the gold," said Lopez, former mayor of Manila and de facto leader of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines while his son, Abap president Manny Lopez, serves in the jury of appeals.

The first two boxers to see action encountered contrasting fates in the first round. Middleweight Christopher Camat lost on points to Russia's Gaydarbek Gaydarbekov on Saturday but light welterweight Romeo Brin hurdled his first assignment, also on points over Sweden's Patrick Bogere on Sunday.

Light welterweight Violito Payla was to fight Tulashboy Doniyorov of Tajikistan late Tuesday night.

Lopez has been speaking for the Philippine boxing team while the boxers have refused to be interviewed, before or after the fight, to spare them the distraction.

Boxing has been the country's best hope for a gold medal in the Olympics. Five of the nine medals won by Filipinos since the Philippines joined the Olympic movement in 1924 have been won by boxers.

Anthony Villanueva and Mansueto Velasco won silvers in 1964 (Tokyo) and 1996 (Atlanta), respectively. The bronze medals were won by Jose "Cely" Villanueva in 1932 (Los Angeles), Leopoldo Serantes in 1988 (Seoul) and Roel Velasco in 1992 (Barcelona).

This year is no different as the leaders of the Philippine delegation look to the boxers to carry the Philippines' hopes.

Tañamor is the brightest of these hopes and much is expected from him Wednesday night.

ATHENS 2004

JASMIN Figueroa takes aim during her round-of-34 showdown with Spain's Almudena Gallardo at the Panathinaiko Stadium in Athens. Among those in the gallery are POC president Cito Dayrit (left) and PSC chair Eric Buhain (fifth from left). ARTEMIO T. ENGRACIA JR.

Figueroa goes down fighting . . .

From page A25

SAMSUNG

took the first end with a string of 9, 9 and 8 while Figueroa faltered with a pair of 7s—one was low and the other was wide—on her next two arrows.

The Filipina fell back by five points in the fifth arrow when she lost control of her shot and had a 6. But she quickly recovered with a 10 against her opponent's 8 after two ends.

Three points down, Figueroa stayed in touch with her opponent. Each time Gallardo threatened to pull away, the Filipina with an ever present smile would score a 10, as she did on her ninth arrow.

Figueroa fell back with three 8s while her opponent strung up three 9s in End No. 4. Down by six points going into the final four arrows, Figueroa rallied with another 10 on her 15th arrow and completed the final end with 8, 7, 9.

Her hopes were raised when Gallardo stumbled with a 6 in the 17th arrow.

Figueroa watched as Gallardo aimed her final shot, needing a 6 to win the match. She shot a 7.

Thus ended Figueroa's distinguished Olympic debut.

Dayrit congratulated Figueroa immediately after the match, telling her she fought a good fight.

"*Sayang* (too bad), but she did better than expected," Dayrit said. "We have a reason to be proud of her."

"It was a solid performance," said Buhain. "She had a good fighting heart."

Figueroa herself thought victory, which would have moved her into the Round of 16 in the knockout matches, was within her grasp.

"Feeling *ko talaga may panalo* (I felt I had a chance to win)," she said. "But I was not lucky."

Her coach, Henry Manalang consoled her that her performance was more than satisfying. Her score of 150 was just two points off her personal best of 152.

"OK *na yun*. At least, the match was close," he told Figueroa.

IMs Paragua, Rañola clash for Genova title

Standings after round 8:

6.5—IM M. Paragua (RP), IM Y. Rañola (RP), IM N. Maiorov (Belarus); **6.0**—GM E. Dervishi (Albania), GM M. Lazic (Yugoslavia), GM S. Djuric (Yugoslavia), GM M. Godena (Italy), FM F. Guido (Italy); **5.5**—IM R. Bancod (RP), IM J. Sanchez (RP), NM R. Nolte (RP), R. Salvador (RP), IM R. Mateo (Dominican Republic), FM S. Gromovs (Italy), FM D. Genocchio (Italy), FM R. Di-Paolo (Italy); **5.0**—NM R. Martinez (RP)

FILIPINO International Masters Mark Paragua and Yves Rañola outplayed their respective opponents yesterday to vault into a share of the lead with overnight solo leader IM Nikita Maiorov of Belarus with only a round left in the Genova International Open in Genova, Italy.

The 20-year-old Paragua defeated Fide Master Sergejs Gromovs of Italy while Rañola, the former Philippine junior champion, subdued compatriot Roland Salvador in the eighth round of this Swiss system tournament.

The victories gave Paragua and Rañola 6.5 points each, the same output of Maiorov, who halved the point with Yugoslav Grandmaster Miroljub Lazic.

Paragua and Rañola will face each other in today's top board encounter, with the victor likely to snatch the crown.

Lazic dropped into a tie for fourth to 8th places with 2001 champion GM Erald Dervishi of Albania, GM Stefan Djuric, GM Michele Godena, the tournament's top seed, and FM Flavio Guido of Italy. *Marlon Bernardino, Contributor*

Luzvimin interclub tees off in Cebu today

TWENTY-TWO teams from all over the country vie for honors in the 12th edition of the Luzvimin Invitational which fires off today at the Cebu Country Club.

Making up the roster in the three-day interclub golf tournament organized by the Women's Golf Association of the Philippines are Alabang, Alta Vista, Bacolod Golf, Baguio Golf and Country Club, Camp Aguinaldo, Canlubang, Cebu Country Club, Club Filipino, Del Monte, Forest Hills, Iloilo Golf, John Hay, Manila Golf, Negros Golf, Pamplona, Phil Navy, Riviera, Sta Elena, Southwoods, Victorias, Villamor, and Wack Wack.

Teams can field as many as six players each day with the best four scores constituting the team total. Scoring will be under the Molave format and teams will be fighting for the top awards in three divisions—Diamond, Ruby and Pearl—depending on the average handicap of their four best players.

Both overall chair Gina Tuason and vice chair Remy Salas expect exciting play this year owing to the well-balanced field.

As the Luzvimin performance of a player accounts for 20 percent of her WGAP amateur ranking, national team mainstay and runaway WGAP Circuit leader Carmelette Villaroman is expected to go all out for the individual category honors.

The other top contenders are Lina de Guzman, Stephanie Yu, Lora Roberto, Carina Ricamonte, Vinice Godio, Therese Dabao and Liza Lopez.

Holding the torch for the Southern teams are Eva Miñoza, Jocel Pagunsan, Nene Guioguio, Kathleen Uy, Maite Unchuan, Gaby Montfort, Maite Lustre and Gigi Frokjear.

Hammering Payla now wields a spear

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

PICKING his first win in Athens should be as cozy as putting his hand in his pocket for flyweight fighter Violito Payla.

Payla enjoys a tremendous edge over Tulashboy Doniorov, the Uzbek whom he had beaten back to back in Busan and Palawan.

You could, in fact, say that outpunching the Uzbek slugger has become a habit for the RP medal hopeful.

But, then, there's no reason for Payla's handlers to get carried away.

The raw equation of the sport decrees that a fighter beaten once would be wiser to the ways of his conqueror.

Twice vanquished, should the Uzbek be informed now of Payla's big weapons?

***

We will never know exactly until after the bout.

You can bet, though, that the Uzbek will come more prepared than in the last two times Payla had feasted on him.

If not, his handlers should be fired for sleeping on the job.

Yes, we could all expect a wiser, more alert opponent in Doniorov in Athens.

But there's something the Uzbek is obviously innocent about.

***

Here: Payla has added a super sharp weapon to his artillery.

The last two times Payla had prevailed, he would often hammer his blows.

He often slammed punches on his target.

He would throw straights, hooks and combinations by launching these from his shoulders.

In short, he relied largely on his power and grit.

Not anymore.

There has been a sharp transformation starting with Payla's final bout in the Asian Boxing Championship in Puerto Princesa where he humbled South Korean pride Kim Ki Suk to take the gold.

***

Instead of a hammer, Payla now wields a spear.

He no longer launches most of his blows from the shoulder.

His sharpest punches emanate from deep within.

The big blows, spears actually, are launched from around the navel, seat of inner power.

While he used to either push or slam his punches, he now stings with the new-found sharpness.

Maybe it's supposed to be a team secret.

But the transformation was confirmed by RP boxing coach Nolito Velasco, who attested to Payla's shift to a sharper scientific stance before they left for abroad.

"*Ibang-iba talaga, madiin at matalas* (It's totally different, both hard and sharp)," Velasco said while thanking a stray interviewer who had taught Payla the secret skill.

***

Anyway, unlike with Romeo Brin whose fierce, sensational win was seen on evening television, over the National Broadcasting Network, Payla's fight may've been viewed by only a few.

This should actually be reported in the past tense, because the Payla clash with Doniorov was scheduled in the wee hours of Wednesday.

We expected Payla to make full use of his concealed, spear-like phantom punches.

Now, if we woke up with the sad news of an upset, it could be the result of only two things.

Either his spear had broken, or Payla had lost to himself.

That would, indeed, be as silly and sad as digging into an empty pocket.

***

(MAIL: From Teddy Reynoso, basketball scholar from Longos, San Jose, Bulacan: "No problem if the 'national team' formed and being sponsored by Cebuana Lhuillier is preparing for the SEA Games next year. However, if this team is being projected by both its sponsor and the BAP as the regular squad to represent the country in various international meets like the ABC pre-World and pre-Olympic qualifiers, we would be in for even bigger shame.")

Club Malarayat venue of 89th RP Open

By Musong Castillo

LIPA CITY—The National Golf Association of the Philippines and the sprawling Club Malarayat layout here yesterday virtually reached an agreement making this 27-hole complex south of Manila the next site of the Philippine Open.

NGAP president Benny Gopez and Club Malarayat golf director Mike Carr finalized details of the memorandum of agreement which both parties will sign in the first week of next month.

"We're very proud and excited to have the Open," said Carr, after Club Malarayat was chosen over two other venues, one in Mindanao and the other in the Visayas, for the 89th staging of the $200,000 event.

Representatives from the Asian tour are expected to inspect Club Malarayat in the next two months.

The Philippine Open is a part of the Asian tour calendar.

The Mt. Makulot and Mt. Lobo nines will likely be used for the Open, slated Feb. 10-13 next year.

Members of the NGAP board played the Makulot nine yesterday.

SPORTSWATCH

Balce, Wolff, Arevalo advance

MARK Balce trounced Joshua Galang, 6-2, 6-1, in the boys' 14-under division at the resumption of the adidas Tennis Challenge 2004 at the Ynares Sports Complex clay courts in Pasig City. Balce advanced to the next round with Fil-German Matthias Wolff, who edged Tomic Apacible, 7-6, 6-2; and Patrick Arevalo, who outlasted Kim Saraza, 6-3, 7-5, in the tournament organized by CTW, supported by Milo and Globe, and sanctioned by the Philippine Tennis Association. In other completed matches, Russel Arcilla ousted Jopy Mamawal, 6-3, 6-2, in the 16-under class and Tim Polero routed Ismael Escares, 6-2, 6-0; Erika Lagura nipped Shanin Melgar, 3-6, 7-6, 7-6; and Deo Talatayod defeated Pocholo Macalino, 6-4, 6-4, in the unisex 10-under group.

1st Floro Nival Memorial golf today

THE 1ST Floro Nival Memorial golf tournament kicks off today with 60 senior and super senior professionals coming out of a long layoff and some 100 amateurs competing in Friday's pro-am at the tricky, par-68 Camp Aguinaldo Golf Club. A three-cornered fight among local pros Roger Antonio, Lito Casas and Rey Alit is expected for the top prize of P25,000 in the absence of Mario Siodina who is competing in the rich Japanese senior tour. A bunch of newly turned senior pros led by Ben Bello could also pose a threat in this three-in-one tournament presented by Electrobus Consolidated Inc., the Philippine representative of Callaway Golf USA, organized by the SPGAP and backed by Circa 16 Golf Club.

BASEBALL AWARD: Yoshio Oda, representing Pony Baseball Asia-Pacific Zone president Shijuki Ito, gives an award to Rodolfo Totoy Tingzon Sr. (right) for establishing youth baseball leagues in the country and the Asia-Pacific in the '60s. With them are Rep. Antonio Roman and Chiang Chung-hau, Chinese Taipei delegation head.

2-cock derby at Las Piñas Coliseum

FAST-PACED fights are scheduled in tonight's express 2-cock derby at the air-conditioned Las Piñas Coliseum with Sagupaan Complexor 3000 as sponsor. To be hosted by Junjun Peñaflorida, this event stakes a cash prize of P100,000 for an entry fee of P3,300. For inquiries, contact 8731040 and 8743910 (look for Gerry or Julius). Meanwhile, the last three days of screening for the Annual Las Piñas 6-Stag Derby is set on Aug. 21, 22 and 24. To be hosted by Mayor Nene Aguilar and sponsored by Pagcor-Casino Filipino, this stagfighting season-opener is set on Aug. 24 and 26. Aside from the prize of P1 million, two brand-new motorcycles will be given to the champions. Entry fee is P15,000.

AN UNDERWATER camera captures a scene many feel will not happen in a long while— American Michael Phelps (left), Dutch Pieter Van den Hoogenband (center) and Aussie Ian Thorpe disputing the 200 freestyle gold.

Loss starts US roster debates

ATHENS, Greece—The US men's basketball team could have brought a designated three-point shooter to the Olympics but decided on an extra big man instead.

That choice is coming back to haunt them, and the man in charge of the selection committee was on the defensive Monday when asked about it.

"It was a collective decision among the coaches and the committee to go that direction, and he was chosen," USA Basketball selection committee chair Stu Jackson said of Emeka Okafor, who is languishing on the bench as the 12th man.

Coming off a shocking 92-73 loss to Puerto Rico, the American men will play Greece on Tuesday night in front of a boisterous crowd whose noise level will no doubt be ratcheted up now that everyone has seen how the US team is not just vulnerable, but beatable.

Meanwhile, Yao Ming bounced back from a rough opening game with 39 points and 13 rebounds to lead China over New Zealand, 69-62. *AP*

RACE OF THE CENTURY

Phelps bid 'Thorpedoed'

ATHENS, Greece—Michael Phelps couldn't catch the Thorpedo—and he won't be catching Mark Spitz, either.

Phelps' quest for seven gold medals ended after just three events, doomed by another bronze Monday night in the most anticipated race at the Olympic pool—the head-to-head showdown with Australia's Ian Thorpe in the 200-m freestyle.

Thorpe has ruled the event for years, but Phelps couldn't resist seeing what he could do against the man in black—part of the larger goal to break Spitz's record from the 1972 Munich Games.

His long arms churning smoothly through the azure water, Thorpe passed Pieter Van den Hoogenband in the homestretch, finishing with an Olympic record of 1 minute, 44.71 seconds. The Dutchman's time was 1:45.23, while Phelps never caught the top two.

As he touched the wall, Thorpe quickly looked at the scoreboard and thrust a fist in the air, yelling as if to say "Take that!" when he saw a "1" beside his name—and a "2" beside Van den Hoogenband.

Van den Hoogenband, the defending Olympic champion, pulled off a shocking upset of Thorpe four years ago at Sydney. He got off to a quick start and was more than one second under world-record pace at the halfway point, but he couldn't maintain it and finished with the silver.

"Well, now we are even," said Thorpe, who won the fifth gold medal of his career and second of the Athens Games.

ATHENS 2004

The 19-year-old Phelps was third most of the way, setting an American record of 1:45.32 that was only good enough for bronze.

"It was tough racing the two greatest freestylers of all time," Phelps said. "I had fun out there. I did what I wanted to do."

Thorpe and Van den Hoogenband quickly clasped hands, while an exhausted Phelps clung to a lane rope, watching a replay of the race on the video board. Finally, he came over to congratulate his two rivals, then turned to swim out of the pool on the opposite side.

Two other Americans did claim gold on this night.

GREATEST ever, multiplied by three—Phelps (left), Thorpe (center) and van den Hoogenband receive their medals. REUTERS

Natalie Coughlin won the 100 backstroke, falling short of her own world record but holding off Kirsty Coventry of Zimbabwe. France's Laure Manaudou took bronze, her second medal of the games.

Aaron Peirsol was first in the men's 100 backstroke, the first gold medal of his career. Markus Rogan of Austria claimed silver and Japan's Tomomi Morita held off American Lenny Krayzelburg for the bronze.

Krayzelburg, who won three golds in Sydney, fell short of a medal in his only individual event by just two-100ths of a second.

Luo Xuejuan of China won gold in the 100 breaststroke, beating Australians Brooke Hanson and Leisel Jones.

An Olympics that has been plagued by poor crowds didn't have any worries on this night. The 10,000-seat pool was packed: orange-clad fans cheering on Van den Hoogenband; Thorpe's supporters distinguished by their yellow and green attire; Phelps' backers waving American flags big and small. *AP*

Davao gains PFF semis

ROSE Ton Bariñan scored twice to tow the girls from Davao past Cebu, 3-1, and assure them a spot in the semifinals of the PFF-SuperFerry National Under-19 Women's Football Championship yesterday at the muddy Marikina City Sports Center field.

Bariñan scored in the 40th and 52nd to assure her team a slot in the final four of the event co-organized by the Philippine Football Federation and the Marikina City Football Association and backed by Marikina Mayor Marides C. Fernando and the city government.

Earlier, Laguna punished Rizal, 3-0, in Group C in the tournament backed by SuperFerry and supported by adidas, Red Ribbon Bakeshop, Petron, Unicef, New Pagcor and Aboitiz Express.

Legaspi-Albay upended Masbate, 1-0, in another Group C match.

The National Capitol Region and Oriental Mindoro were still battling at presstime. Cagayan Misamis ended its stint by blasting luckless Iligan City, 5-0.

UM sweeps first round

DEFENDING champion University of Manila scored a 70-69 squeaker over the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Pasay to sweep the first round of the Naascu basketball tournament at the UM gym.

The Hawks nearly squandered an 18-point halftime lead and escaped with the win only after Chris Navo of PLP bungled a game-winning basket as time expired.

The victory was the eighth in as many outings for the Hawks of coach Loreto Tolentino and manager lawyer Ernesto de los Santos. Overall, the win was the 61st in a row for the Hawks since the league's inception four years ago.

Federer in 'hot' debut

ATHENS—Swiss gold medal favorite Roger Federer lost his cool at the Olympics on Monday in a rare flash of temper but recovered to win his men's singles first round on Monday.

He beat Russian Nikolay Davydenko, 6-3, 5-7, 6-1, but received an official warning for ball abuse after hitting it on to the roof of the center court in frustration at the start of the second set.

At the time, he was trailing 3-0 but recovered to serve for the match at 5-4 before losing the set.

"It's a long time since I got my last warning," the world number one told a news conference.

"For me it was a sign, I needed to just show a reaction because I was unhappy with the way I played in the second set.

"I got frustrated. But the important thing is I won, not how I acted on court."

Federer eventually raced through the third set after switching to serve-volley tactics.

"I had to play fair against him and I played false when I served for the (second) set," he said.

"I am happy to be through. That's what counts in the end, not really how. I'd have liked to win in straight sets but it didn't happen."

The Swiss, who won the Australian Open at the start of the year and also successfully defended his Wimbledon title in July, is desperate for an Olympic medal having just missed out on a bronze at Sydney in 2000.

Despite his patchy display in blustery conditions on Monday, Federer said he preferred to concentrate on the positive.

"The conditions weren't easy today as there was a lot of wind," he said. "I'm happy, I know I can definitely play better than I did but the important thing is to go through.

"That's what I expect of myself. I am the big favorite and I want to take advantage of it." *Reuters*

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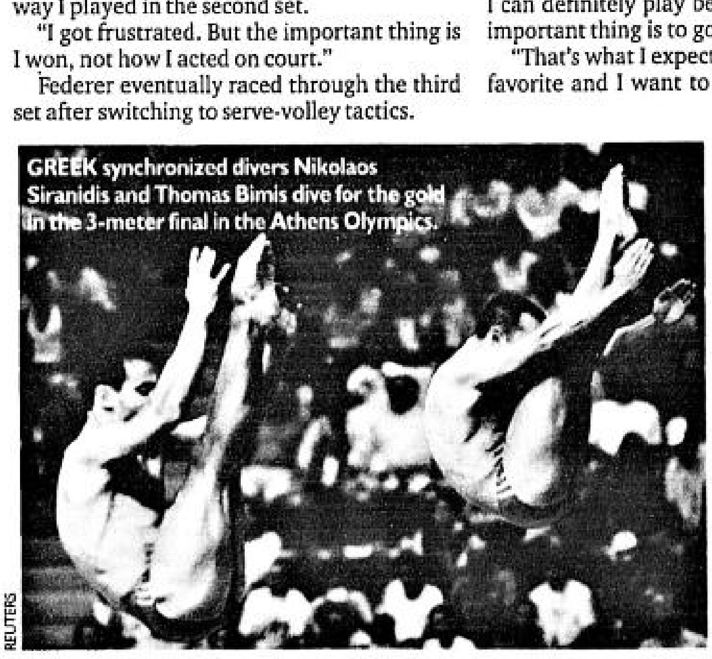
ATHENS SUMMER OLYMPICS MEDAL TALLY

Country	G	S	B	Total
China	10	4	1	15
Australia	6	2	5	13
Japan	5	1	1	7
United States	3	5	5	13
France	2	2	3	7
Italy	2	2	1	5
Turkey	2	0	1	3
Ukraine	2	0	1	3
Russia	1	5	2	8
Germany	1	2	1	4
Hungary	1	1	1	3
South Korea	1	0	2	3
Thailand	1	0	2	3
Greece	1	0	1	2
South Africa	1	0	0	1
Netherlands	0	2	3	5
Cuba	0	0	3	3
North Korea	0	2	0	2
Poland	0	2	0	2
Slovakia	0	1	1	2
Belgium	0	0	2	2
Bulgaria	0	0	2	2
Austria	0	1	0	1
Britain	0	1	0	1
Georgia	0	1	0	1
Indonesia	0	1	0	1



GREEK synchronized divers Nikolaos Siranidis and Thomas Bimis dive for the gold in the 3-meter final in the Athens Olympics. REUTERS

Buhain lauds RP athletes

ATHENS—Philippine Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain lauded boxer Romeo Brin and archer Jasmin Figueroa on Tuesday and rallied Filipino athletes to strive harder in their drive to win a medal.

"While we are one step closer to a medal, we are one in prayer with the rest of our countrymen in seeing a Filipino up there on the podium, hopefully with the gold medal, and hearing our national anthem being played," Buhain said.

Brin outclassed the taller Uganda-born Patrick Bogere of Sweden, 45-35, in their light welterweight clash on Sunday to earn a second round berth, making up for Christopher Camat's early exit from the middleweight category on Saturday.

While praising Brin's big fighting heart, Buhain was amazed by Figueroa's "miracle of an upset" over two-time Olympic medalist and former world champion Natalia Valeeva of Italy in the Round of 64.

"That (Figueroa win) was totally huge. That was a miracle of an upset considering the stature of her foe," Buhain said. "But Jasmin was awesome, she showed what a Filipina's heart is made of."

The PSC chief also expects the Philippine taekwondo team to break the jinx of Sydney, where the RP contingent went home without a medal.

Iloilo snaps skid

ILOILO CITY—Carlos Sayon Jr. snapped out of his slump as the Iloilo Warriors subdued the visiting Baguio Cardinals, 87-84, Monday in the NBC (National Basketball Conference) finals at the University of San Agustin gym here.

The 6-foot-3 forward erupted with a season-high 29 points, 11 in the fourth quarter, to halt the five-game skid of the Warriors of Ilonggo businessman Robert Uy.

The Cardinals of University of Baguio president Des Bautista fell to 3-3 in the tournament sponsored by Panasonic, Spring Cooking Oil, PCSO, Sulpicio Lines, Nature's Spring Mineral Water, Cebu Ferries, Air Philippines, Supercat, Skygo Motorcycles, Accel and Molten.

Sayon showed his versatility by adding three rebounds, three assists and two steals in a solid effort to win player of the game honors.

Juvic shoots 8-over

JUVIC Pagunsan struggled with an 8-over-par 80 playing in bad weather on Monday (Tuesday) and was in danger of early elimination in the 104th US Amateur golf championship at the Winged Foot Golf Club in Mamaroneck, New York.

Tackling the east course, Pagunsan started the day with a birdie but bogeyed the next two. He also made a double bogey on the par-5 fourth and went five over the rest of the way.

He was in a tie for 163rd out of the 312 starters with 36 players still to complete their rounds as play was suspended due to inclement weather.

Only the top 64 will advance to the match play tournament proper starting Wednesday.

Oscar Alvarez of Colombia, behind five birdies over his last 13 holes, shot a 3-under-par 67 at the East Course for a provisional three-stroke lead.

Spencer Levin, Jason Hartwick and Luke List shared second place with even-par 70s.

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3 A CINDERELLA STORY
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10	BANGKOK HAUNTED 2

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8	AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS

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6	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR

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4	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR

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10:25LFS/11:00 LMF/
12:40 END

2
STEPFORD'S WIVES
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3 big parties to celebrate new Smirnoff

MUSIC MAKERS for the Smirnoff bash are (clockwise from top left) Bad Boy Jeff, DJ Manolet Dario, couchLab and DJ Ace.

ON SATURDAY, Aug. 21, party people will be flocking to the Mile Long Compound in Makati City for a bash that will celebrate the new look of Smirnoff Vodka.

Smirnoff has gathered some of Manila's hottest DJs for three massive parties in one big venue. The parties start at 9 p.m.

The partygoers should brace themselves for the house music of Lady Trinity together with James McCranie at Halo.

They can groove to the hip-hop beats of DJ Ace and Bad Boy Jeff at Club V.

Manolet Dario and couchLab will serve chill-out music at the Smirnoff VIP Lounge Tent where celebrities are expected to gather.

Unique performances by street musicians will cap the evening of unparalleled entertainment.

The Smirnoff event will be exclusively covered by MTV Philippines and Magic 89.9.

It will also kick off the search for the Smirnoff Party Liaisons: confident, bold and versatile young individuals who exude the character of Smirnoff Vodka.

So get spotted, bask in the limelight and party on with Smirnoff Vodka!

Smirnoff party revelers will also get the chance to bring home a copy of the Smirnoff "Unleash" CD, a collection of the hottest dance tracks.

The Smirnoff "Unleash" CD is now available at all Tower Records, Music One, Astroplus and O outlets.

SHOW TIME

Spirits dance face-off

THE SPIRITS Dance Face-off, the weekly dance competition for groups, has started and will rage on until the end of October.

The competition is held every Wednesday night at Spirits Malate Coyote Bar, at the corner of J. Nakpil and Jorge Bocobo Streets in Malate, Manila.

The contest is open to males and females in groups of five to eight members. The participants should be 18 to 22 years old.

Auditions are held every Wednesday from 5-8 p.m. Three to four groups will be chosen every Wednesday.

The weekly winners will receive P20,000 in cash and gift certificates. The 1st runner-up will receive P5,000 cash and the 2nd runner-up P3,000 cash.

The weekly winners will vie for the monthly title.

For more information, call Ian Sales of RV Image Magnet, 8164245 or 812-7566.

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PREMIERE

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6 GOLD (SDDS)	THE CINDERELLA STORY
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5	

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Unmasking the real Marlon Brando

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

WHAT was **Marlon Brando** really like? So many contradictory myths and scandals have surrounded the ace actor through the years that his real nature has been radically obscure.

For the real lowdown, we turn to his wife, **Anna Kashfi** and her book on Brando. The actor shared so much with his wife that her book veritably bursts with little-known information about him, facts that help us appreciate Brando as he really was without the trappings of stellar image and the distracting detritus of scandal and controversy:

As a child, Kashfi recalls, Marlon suffered from his salesman-father's indifference, which pushed him to his mother "and planted the seed of his ambivalent feeling toward women and his tangled sexuality."

His mother was permissive and encouraged free expression. Marlon became very determined and competitive. Since his two older sisters were occasional stage actresses, he decided he would become a thespian, too.

He left for New York City at age 19 and scrounged around for acting parts. With no real offers forthcoming, he found occasional work as elevator operator, doorman, busboy, encyclopedia salesman—and even milkman! The milk of human kindness took a long time in flowing for the neophyte actor, however.

Things looked up when Marlon joined the Dramatic Workshop of the New School for Social Research, and the formidable **Stella Adler** became his acting coach. A disciple of **Konstantin Stanislavski**, Adler taught Marlon that true acting "emanates from an inner emotional reserve."

Marlon listened to his mentor's advice, and took it to unparalleled heights. As his thespic persona acquired greater power and focus, his agent sent him to the major film studies for screen tests. Alas, he failed all of them.

That's when he auditioned for the play, "I Remember Mama," where he got cast in the secondary role of Nels. His performance was noticed, and one of his new fans got him into the Actors Studio, where his penchant for "real" acting was further honed.

Despite his growing reputation as a spontaneous troublemaker, Marlon continued to be cast in plays. But nothing really worked wonders for him until he played Stanley Kowalski in "A Streetcar Named Desire."

As Marlon "settled into performing his role with a power, energy and virtuosity that remains unsurpassed," he became popular, then famous. His performance was lauded by critics for being "astonishingly authentic," and he was hailed as "the greatest actor America has produced."

His sexuality in the role of Stanley Kowalski "provided a new experience for the theater." **Tennessee Williams**, who wrote "Streetcar," raved, "It was an experience to observe with what chameleon ease Brando acquired Kowalski's cruel and gaudy colors—how superbly, like a guileful salamander, he slithered into the part, how his own persona evaporated."

Brando was such a success at playing Kowalski that people said they were alike. But he denied it: "No, he's the antithesis of me. He's intolerant, selfish, with no sensitivity and morality except his insistence on his own way."

And, was he right? Anna Kashfi shares, "My years with Marlon Brando were years of bitterness, of rancor, of temper tantrums; they were years of thorns and vinegar.

"Marlon has been described as a whirlpool of sensuality that is initially thrilling, but soon sucks in and exhausts every passing creature. I have tumbled and twisted at the center of that vortex—loved it, loathed it, endured it, and finally struggled for years to escape its grasp."

Clearly, there's more to Marlon/Stanley than meets the educator's iddled eye!

(To be concluded)

Quiz Bee

To date, the Quiz Bee Foundation has successfully mounted 24 National Quiz

UNMASKING/ A30

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ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	MASARAP NA PUGAD / TUKAAN
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

A	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
B	CLOSED
C	

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA 1, 2, 3 & 4	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR/STEPFORD WIVES/CINDERELLA STORY/THE VILLAGE
PREMERE THEATRE	STEPFORD WIVES

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
CINEMA-2	KARELASYON
CINEMA-3	KING ARTHUR
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	I, ROBOT
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	ELLA ENCHANTED
CINEMA-6	MAKAMUNDO
CINEMA-7	CATWOMAN
CINEMA-8	IMELDA
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	COLLATERAL
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	THE VILLAGE
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	CINDERELLA STORY
CINEMA-12	GARFIELD
CINEMA-14	DEAD PEOPLE
CINEMA-15	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU

LORES

CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN

(LAS PIÑAS)	SPIDERMAN 2
CINEMA-1	LADY KILLERS
CINEMA-2	I ROBOT
CINEMA-4	RESERVED

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARAÑAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

Araneta Center ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX

3	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	11:00 am 1:00 pm 3:00 pm 5:00 pm 7:00 pm 9:00 pm
4	ALIEN vs PREDATOR	12:10 pm 2:25 pm 4:40 pm 6:55 pm 9:10 pm
5	THE VILLAGE	12:10 pm 2:25 pm 4:40 pm 6:55 pm 9:10 pm
6	BANGKOK HAUNTED 2	11:35 am 1:55 pm 4:15 pm 6:35 pm 8:55 pm
7	STEPFORD WIVES	11.00 am 1:00 pm 3:00 pm 5.00 pm 7:00 pm 9:00 pm

ARANETA COLISEUM

Aug 18	BENCH FASHION SHOW
Aug 21	AVON SALES CONVENTION
Aug 22	UAAP: ATENEO vs LA SALLE
Aug 27	CUSA OPENING CEREMONIES
Sep 11	UAAP: ATENEO vs FEU
Sep 12	UAAP: CHEERING COMPETITION
Sep 15	JOHN MAXWELL in Manila

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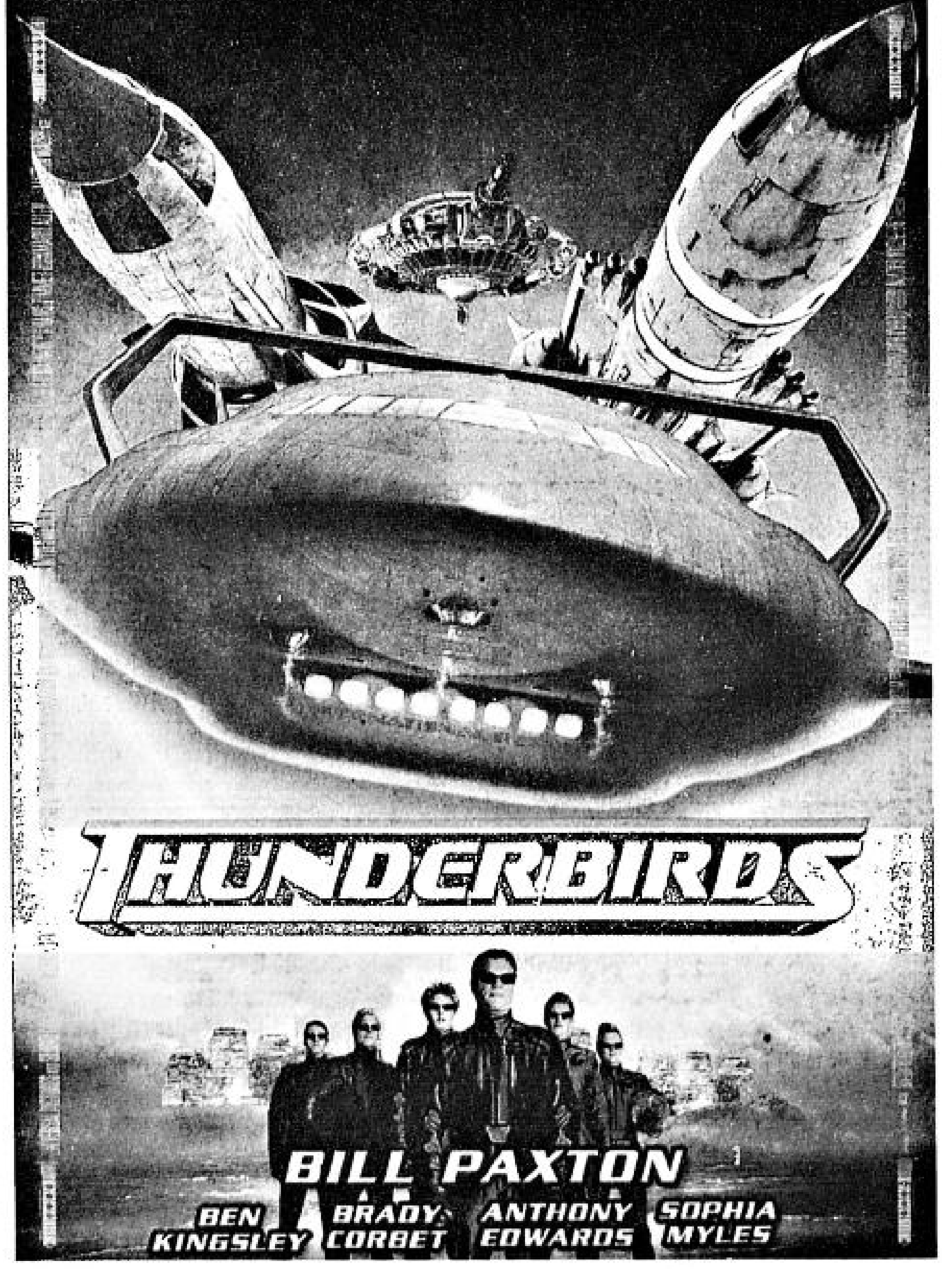

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2	THE VILLAGE
3	BANGKOK HAUNTED
4	COLLATERAL
5	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
6	THE STEPFORD WIVES
7	JANDARA
8	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
9	CATWOMAN
10	CINDERELLA STORY

MATINEE: Monday to Friday/ 10 am-4pm except holidays
Matinee Price: P80 for one level cinemas
Regular Price: P150 THX / P95/65 for two levels cinemas / P95 for one level cinemas

ERMITA

536-7809 to 12

1	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
2	JANDARA
3	THE VILLAGE
4	THE STEPFORD WIVES
5	BANGKOK HAUNTED
6	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
7	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR

METRO EAST

682-8193/99 / 682-8280

1	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
2	BANGKOK HAUNTED
3	THE VILLAGE
4	COLLATERAL
5	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
6	A CINDERELLA STORY
7	THE STEPFORD WIVES
8	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU

NOVALICHES / FAIRVIEW

935-3229 / 31

1	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
2	THE VILLAGE
3	COLLATERAL
4	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
5	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
6	A CINDERELLA STORY
7	GARFIELD
8	CATWOMAN

Citisquare MALABON

288-0985/2576

1	KARELASYON
2	THE VILLAGE
3	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
4	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU

CAINTA

240-4661

1	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
2	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
3	THE VILLAGE
4	A CINDERELLA STORY

STA. ROSA

(049)837-0907

1	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
2	A CINDERELLA STORY
3	ELLA ENCHANTED
4	THE VILLAGE
5	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU

LIPA

757-3664 / 312-5870

1	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
2	COLLATERAL
3	ELLA ENCHANTED
4	PERLAS
5	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU

DASMARIÑAS

852-2125 / 416-4332

1	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
2	KARELASYON
3	THE VILLAGE
4	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
5	ELLA ENCHANTED

STARMILLS

San Fernando Pampanga
875-1927 / 961-5270

1	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
2	KARELASYON
3	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
4	ETERNAL SUNSHINE
5	THE VILLAGE
6	COLLATERAL

IMUS

471-4188 / 875-5858

1	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
2	DEAD PEOPLE
3	THE VILLAGE
4	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
5	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
6	SYLVIA

BACOLOD

441-0456/59

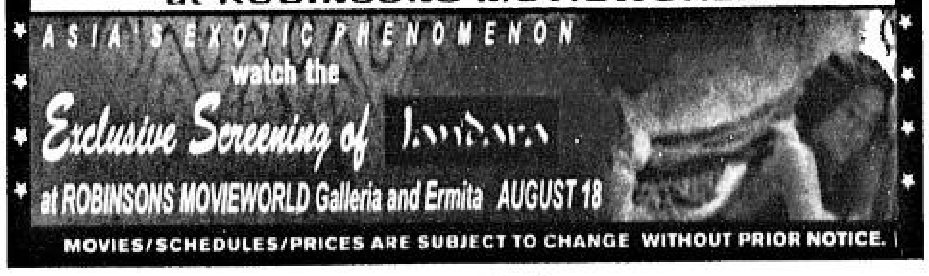
1	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
2	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
3	ETERNAL SUNSHINE
4	BEAUTIFUL LIFE
5	AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS
6	KAINAN

ILOILO

336-8070/78

1	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
2	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
3	AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS
4	THE PRINCE AND ME
5	DEAD PEOPLE
6	ELLA ENCHANTED

at ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD


ASIA'S EXOTIC PHENOMENON
watch the
Exclusive Screening of Jandara
at ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD Galleria and Ermita AUGUST 18

MOVIES/SCHEDULES/PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

It's Tsong's turn to be suspended

Juliana Palermo's sexy TV show gets X rating

From page A32

"The MTRCB is pleased with GMA 7's decision to suspend Marquez," Laguardia said yesterday. "All noontime and prime time TV show hosts should be more careful in delivering jokes because children are watching."

GMA 7 production manager Magno said "S-Files" would "avoid discussion, other than clinical, or unless treated with utmost good taste, of sex matters related to it."

In its Aug. 1 episode, "S-Files" aired an interview with starlet Kat de Santos, who said she considered herself a "semi-virgin."

De Santos said on the show, "*kasi dumating ang tita ko, kinatok kami kaya... Ilang taon kaya ako mabi*-virgin?"

The program then aired taped interviews of other stars and their definitions of a "semi-virgin."

MTRCB chief Laguardia said that aside from avoiding discussions on "sex-related matters," the program also promised "to be more vigilant when it comes to pre-viewing taped interviews."

"These interviews should be wholesome," Laguardia stressed. "Also, ('S-Files') hosts should veer away from too much sex talk."

Last Monday, the MTRCB slapped the new ABC 5 show "Secrets," whose pilot episode was scheduled for airing last night at 9:30 p.m.

NOT FUNNY. Censors say Marquez said "vulgar words."

HOT AND BOTHERED. "Why is the MTRCB afraid of growth," asks "Secrets" host Juliana Palermo.

"Both visuals and dialogue make this program unsuitable for TV viewing," according to a "voting slip" signed by members of the MTRCB review committee.

"This new TV program centers and focuses on talk about sex, discussions about sex in the guise of sex education, (is) hosted by a sexy star, with sexy stars as guests," added the review committee.

The committee said the program's intro alone, which includes "sex-oriented phrases" like "are you going to bed?" and "*gusto mo ba ng malaki?,*" is "not fit for television."

"We recommend that ABC 5 clean up this show," the committee said. "9:30 p.m. is too early. (And even) if they manage to clean up the program, it should be shown at 11 p.m."

Laguardia said the review committee is doing a third deliberation on "Secrets" as of press time.

Host Juliana Palermo called on the MTRCB to "give the new show a chance."

She pointed out that foreign shows, like the blind date programs on cable TV, are far more vulgar than hers.

"Why is the MTRCB so scared of growth?" said Palermo. "We turned in a really clean episode, but they still rejected it.

"We even tried to make it cute and funny," she added.

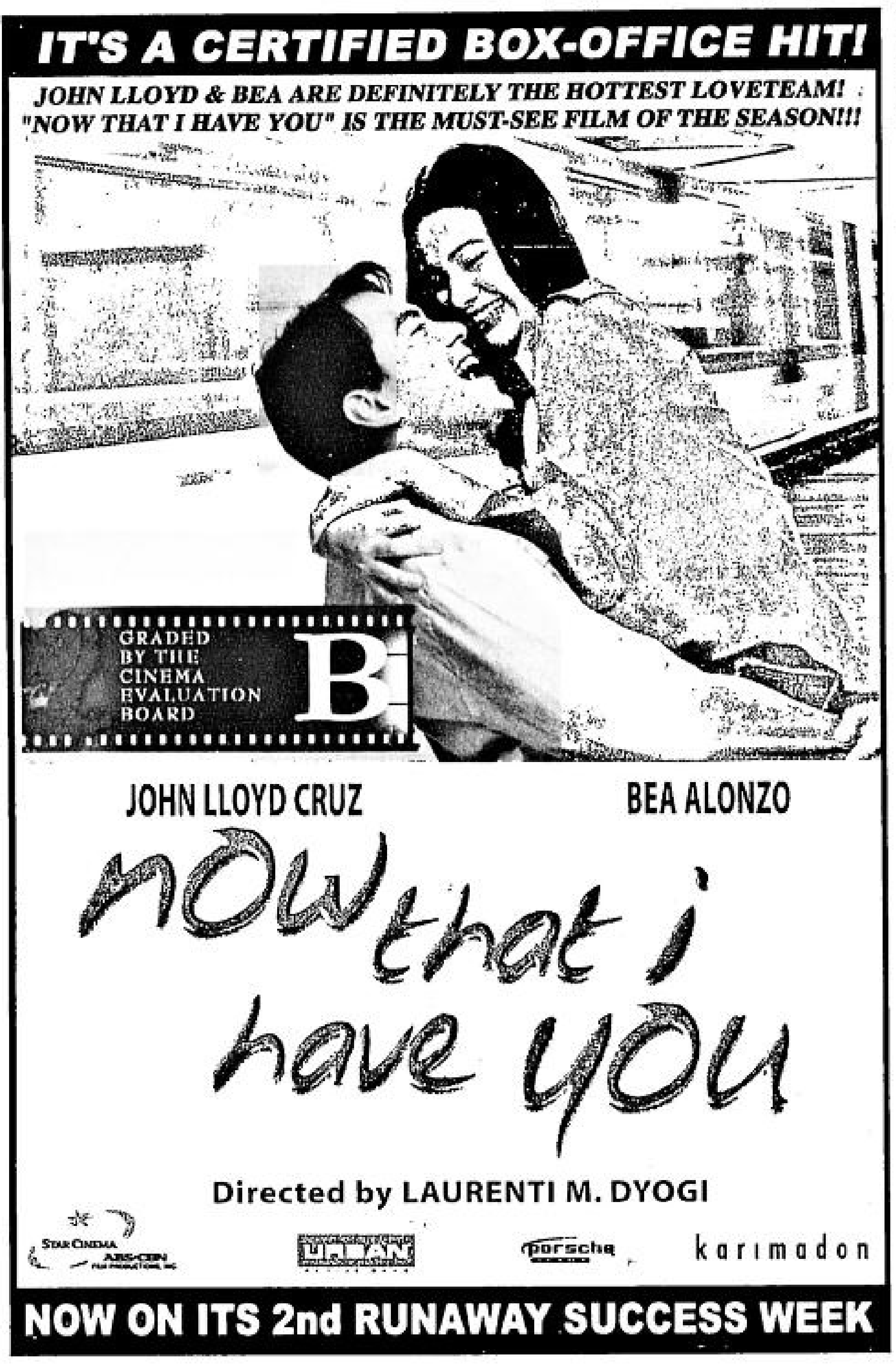
Unmasking...

From page A29

Bee competitions. Its 25th is currently holding school eliminations (until Aug. 31). From Sept. 1 to 31, district eliminations will be conducted, followed by division eliminations (Oct. 1 to 31), regional eliminations (Nov. 1 to 15), the summit of the Super Quiz Bee (Dec. 9 to 12), and the National Grand Finale (Dec. 11).

The summit is a four-day, live-in camp at the Development Academy of the Philippines Hotel and Conference Center in Tagaytay City, with tours, seminars and fellowships for the 136 regional champions and teacher-coaches from the country's 17 regions.

Subject categories are Makabayan, Mathematics, Science and Technology, and General Information & International Affairs. Levels: Tertiary, 1st to 5th year of college, 18-22 years old. Secondary, 1st to 4th year of high school, 14-17 years old. And Elementary, grades 4 to 7, 10-13 years old.



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1	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR	11:45, 2:20, 4:55, 7:30, 10:05	PG-13
2	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR	12:00, 2:35, 5:10, 7:45, 10:20	PG-13
3	STEPFORD WIVES	11:50, 1:50, 3:50, 5:50, 7:50, 10:00	PG-13
4	THE VILLAGE	11:10, 1:30, 3:50 6:10, 8:30, 10:50	PG-13

star group of cinemas movie guide
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- Bangkok Haunted 2
- Alien vs Predator
- Now that I Have you

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- The Village
- Now That I Have You
- Alien vs Predator
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starmall LAS PIÑAS
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- Now That I Have You

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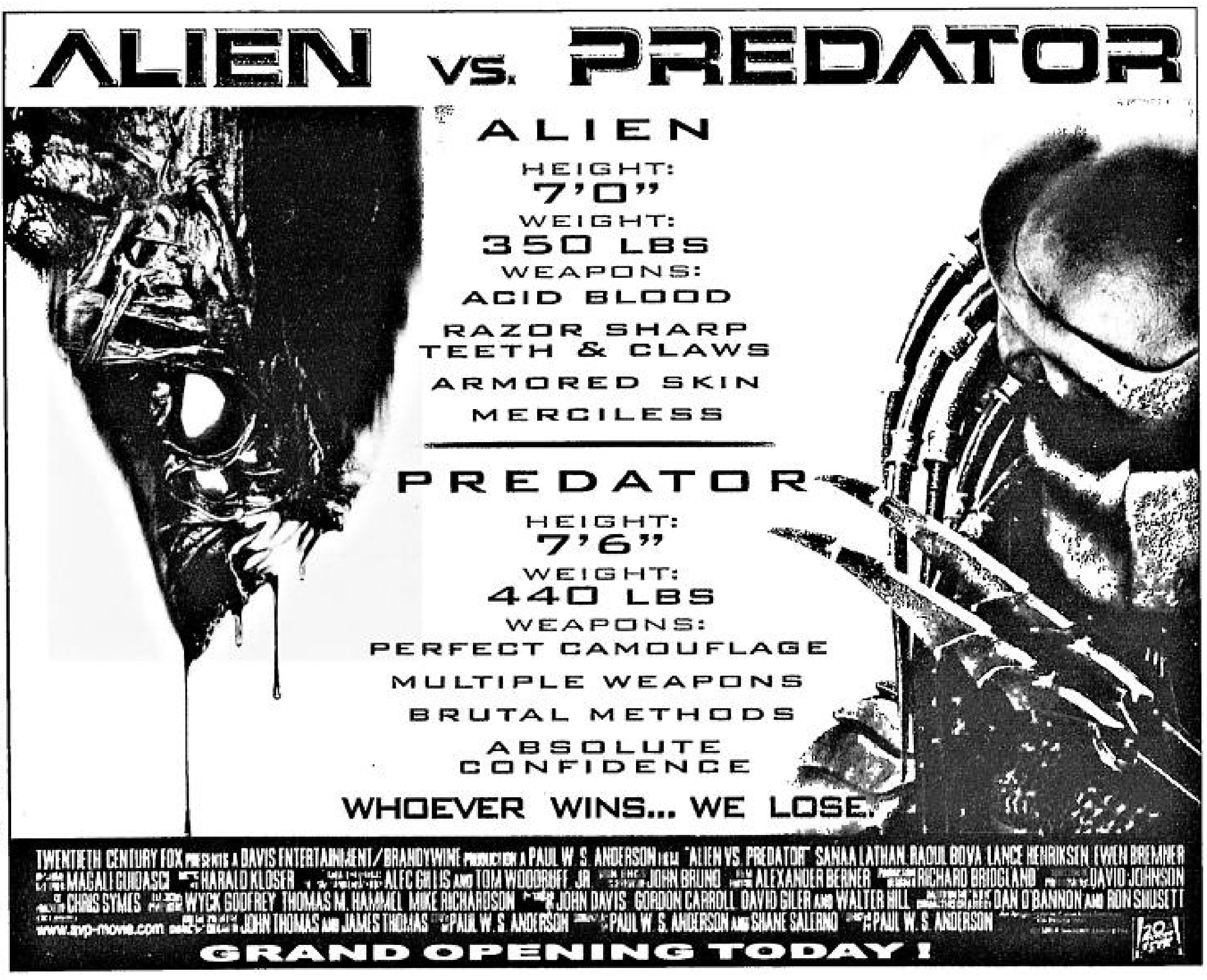

ALIEN vs. PREDATOR

ALIEN
HEIGHT: 7'0"
WEIGHT: 350 LBS
WEAPONS:
ACID BLOOD
RAZOR SHARP TEETH & CLAWS
ARMORED SKIN
MERCILESS

PREDATOR
HEIGHT: 7'6"
WEIGHT: 440 LBS
WEAPONS:
PERFECT CAMOUFLAGE
MULTIPLE WEAPONS
BRUTAL METHODS
ABSOLUTE CONFIDENCE

WHOEVER WINS... WE LOSE.

TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX PRESENTS A DAVIS ENTERTAINMENT/BRANDYWINE PRODUCTION A PAUL W. S. ANDERSON FILM "ALIEN VS. PREDATOR" SANAA LATHAN RAOUL BOVA LANCE HENRIKSEN EWEN BREMNER MAGALI GUIDASCI HARALD KLOSER ALEC GILLIS AND TOM WOODRUFF, JR. JOHN BRUNO ALEXANDER BERNER RICHARD BRIDGLAND DAVID JOHNSON CHRIS SYMES WYCK GODFREY THOMAS M. HAMMEL MIKE RICHARDSON JOHN DAVIS GORDON CARROLL DAVID GILER AND WALTER HILL DAN O'BANNON AND RON SHUSETT www.avp-movie.com JOHN THOMAS AND JAMES THOMAS PAUL W. S. ANDERSON PAUL W. S. ANDERSON AND SHANE SALERNO PAUL W. S. ANDERSON

GRAND OPENING TODAY!

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Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

COLLATERAL R13 12:00,2:30,5:00,7:30,10:00	CINDERELLA STORY GP 11:50,1:50,3:50,5:50,7:50,9:50	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR PG13 12:40,3:05,5:30,7:55,10:20
THE VILLAGE PG13 12:20,2:45,5:10,7:35,10:00	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU GP 12:00,2:25,4:50,7:15,9:40	STEPFORD WIVES PG13 11:15,1:25,3:35,5:45,7:55,10:10

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CINEMA 1 THE VILLAGE 11:00, 1:15, 3:30, 5:45, 8:00, 10:15 P13

CINEMA 2 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR 10:50, 1:05, 3:20, 5:35, 7:50, 10:10 P13

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AUGUST 24 - 25 & 31	NOAH'SBIGBOAT	10AM & 2PM
AUGUST 20 - 21 & 27 - 28	NYOYVOLANTE&NINA	9:00 PM

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A CELEBRITY - CHARITY BAZAAR
The Loft at Rockwell
August 29 Sunday 9 AM - 7 PM

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Akafellas * Amanda Griffin * Andrew E * Antonio Aquitania * Geneva Cruz * JM Rodriguez * Joe d' Mango * Kate Torralba * KC Concepcion * KC Montero * Marc Nelson * Margie Moran Floirendo * Phoemela Barranda * Piolo Pascual * Rissa Samson * Tim Yap and more...

Also featuring chic items, rare finds and must-haves like Havaianas flip flops, Get Happy fashion accessories, Stelle E Stile Italia murano gems, Italian items, Tees and Things clothes and accessories, SoftSpot stuffed toys and novelty items, cosmetic kits, hip belts, funky watches, magic wallets, bags, shoes and many more!

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For booth reservations, please call Ching at 897-8808 loc 259 or 0921-5925121.

KID FRIENDLY. Bianca Araneta

Quiz show gets new co-host

THE NEW "Digital LG Challenge," the quiz show that is now on its fourth year, has a new format and a new look.

It also has a new host, Bianca Araneta, joining original host Paolo Bediones.

Bianca is one of the country's foremost ramp and commercial models.

She also writes a column in a daily newspaper and another in a monthly magazine for teenage girls.

"Bianca was chosen because we saw in her the willingness and the sincerity to help these children, which is what the 'Digital LG Challenge' is about," said LG Electronics Phils. chief executive officer Jeff Hong.

The "Digital LG Challenge" gives out P25,000 in prizes every week.

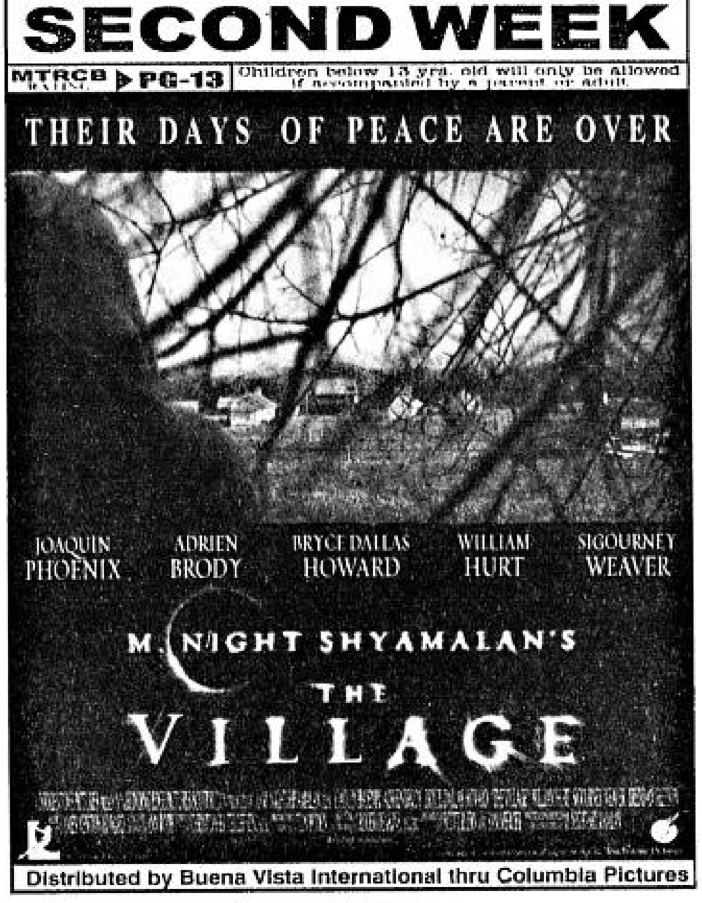
By the end of the year, it will have given away nearly a million pesos in scholarships, according to Paolo.

"It is a show with the purest of intentions and that is to help the youth," says Paolo.

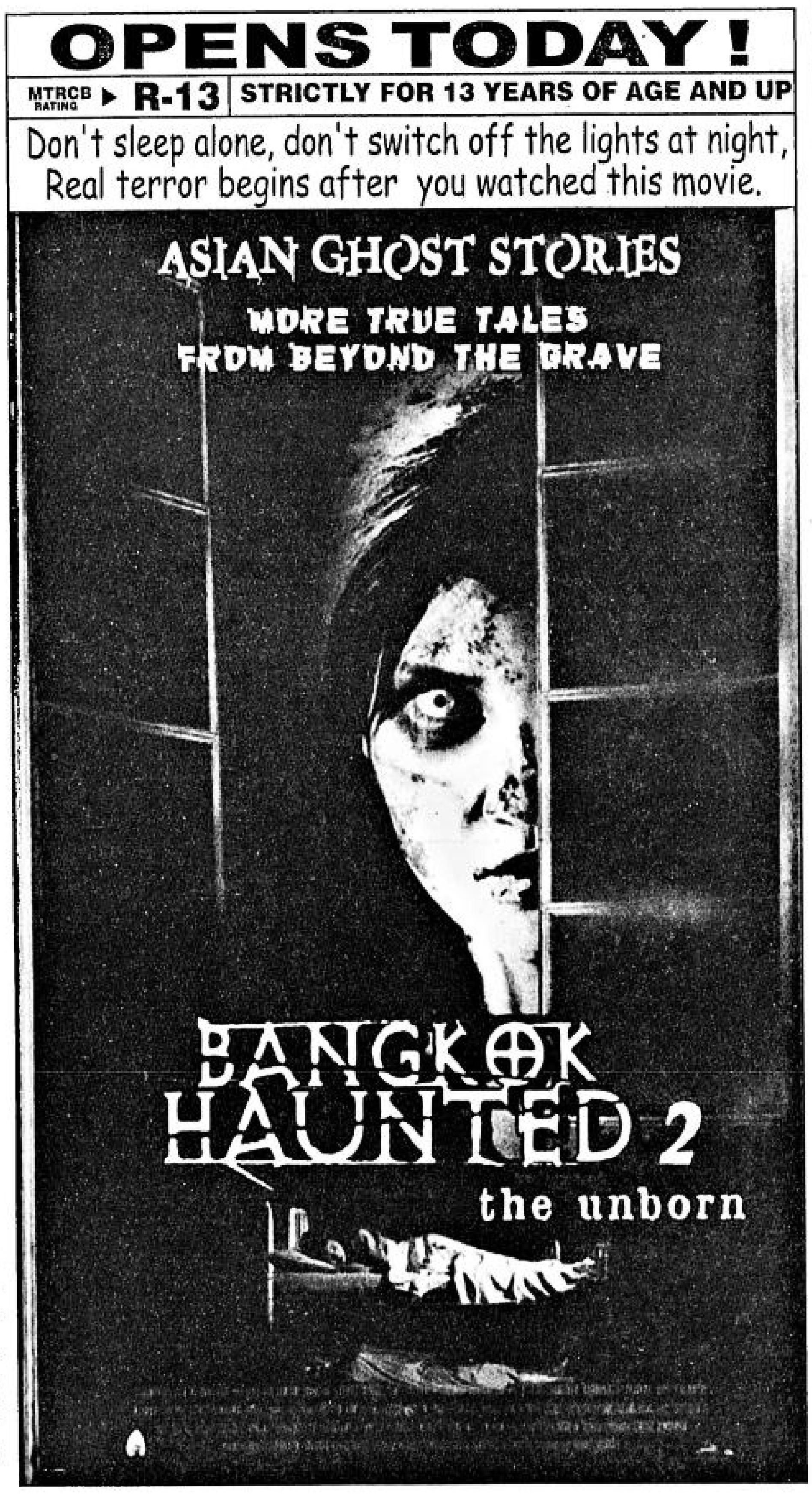
"The Digital LG Challenge" is aired on GMA 7 every Saturday at 9 a.m.

LG Electronics Philippines, established in 1988, has been introducing cutting-edge products in electronics, information and communications to make consumers' lives easier.

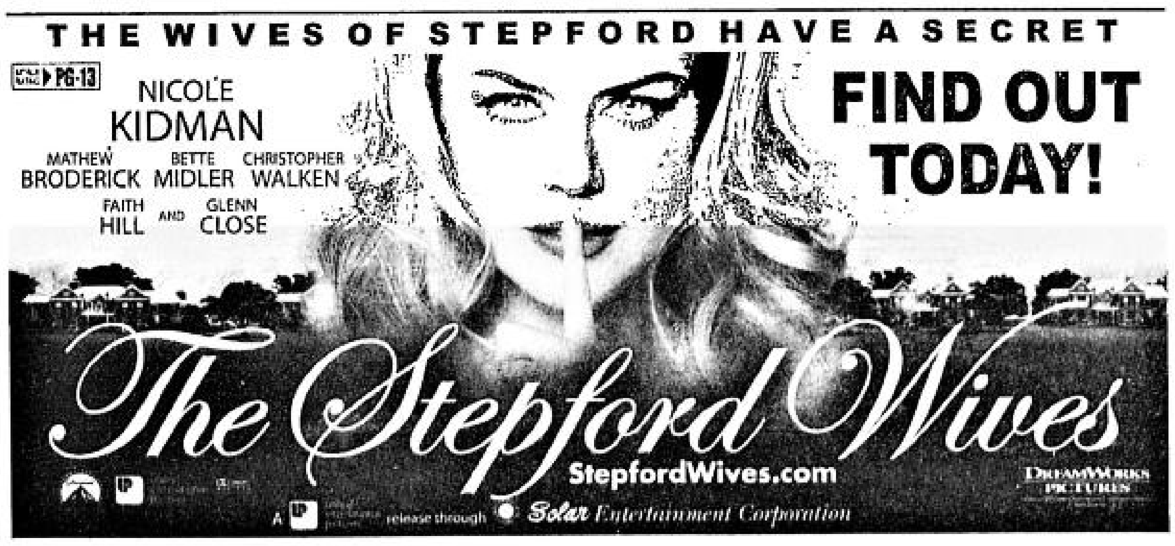
For more information, log on to www.lge.com or call the LG Customer Information Center, 640-2525.



SECOND WEEK
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.
THEIR DAYS OF PEACE ARE OVER
JOAQUIN PHOENIX ADRIEN BRODY BRYCE DALLAS HOWARD WILLIAM HURT SIGOURNEY WEAVER
M. NIGHT SHYAMALAN'S
THE VILLAGE
Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures



OPENS TODAY !
MTRCB RATING ▶ R-13 | STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND UP
Don't sleep alone, don't switch off the lights at night,
Real terror begins after you watched this movie.
ASIAN GHOST STORIES
MORE TRUE TALES FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE
BANGKOK HAUNTED 2
the unborn



THE WIVES OF STEPFORD HAVE A SECRET
PG-13
NICOLE KIDMAN
MATHEW BRODERICK BETTE MIDLER CHRISTOPHER WALKEN
FAITH HILL AND GLENN CLOSE
FIND OUT TODAY!
The Stepford Wives
StepfordWives.com
DREAMWORKS PICTURES
A UIP release through Solar Entertainment Corporation

MTRCB RATING ▶ R-18 | STRICTLY FOR ADULTS ONLY
OPENS TODAY EXCLUSIVELY
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ASIA'S EROTIC PHENOMENON!
A STORY OF SEX, GUILT AND RETRIBUTION
Jandara
A Nonzee Nimibutr Film
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AT THE CENTER

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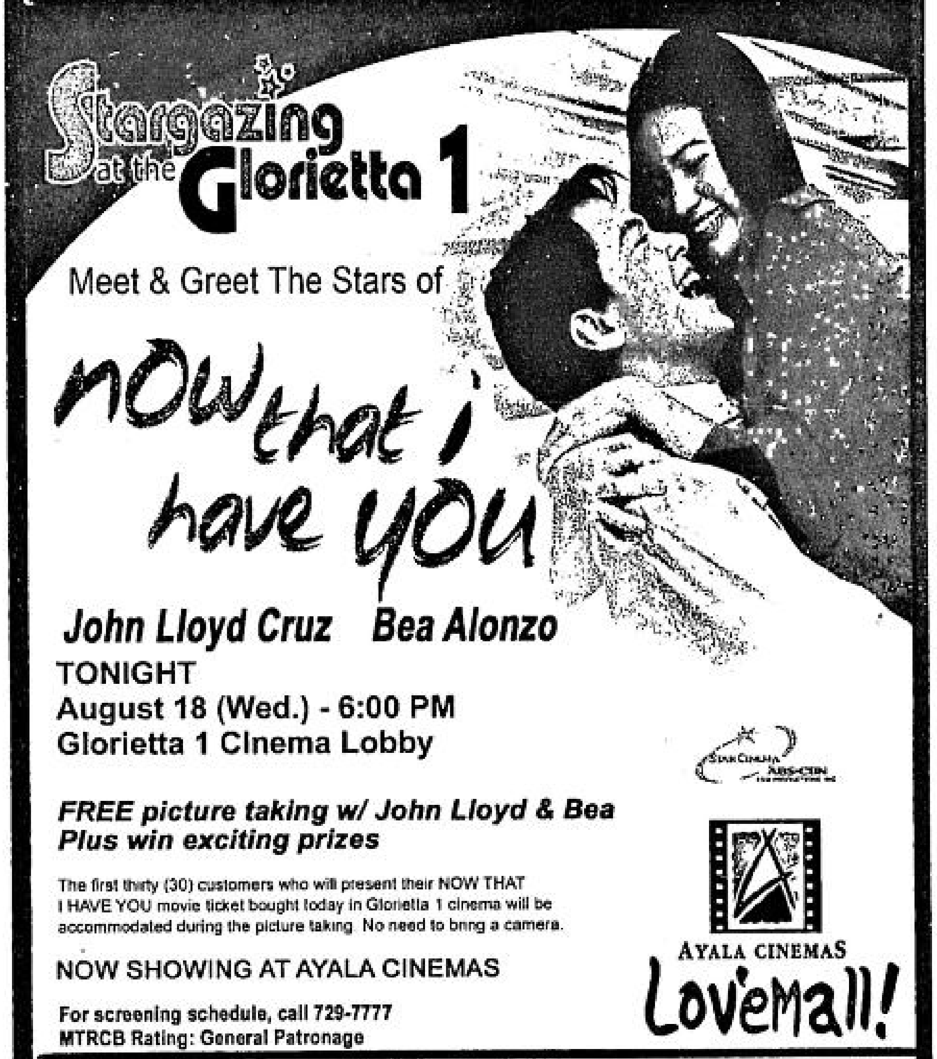
1 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR	1 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR	1 A CINDERELLA STORY	1 THE STEPFORD WIVES 10.55, 1.05, 3:15, 5.25, 7.35, 9.45	GUARANTEED SEATS 1 THE STEPFORD WIVES 12.25, 2.35, 4.45, 6.55, 9.05, 11.15	1 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
2 THE STEPFORD WIVES	2 BANGKOK HAUNTED 2: THE UNBORN	2 THE VILLAGE	2 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR 11:15, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7.40, 9.50	GUARANTEED SEATS 2 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR 12.30, 2.40, 4.50, 7.00, 9.10, 11.20	2 DIRTY DANCING 2
3 THE VILLAGE	3 THE STEPFORD WIVES	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 THE STEPFORD WIVES 11:45, 1:50, 4:00, 6:10, 8:20, 10:30		GUARANTEED SEATS 3 COLLATERAL 2.00, 4.30, 7.00, 9.30	3 THE UNINVITED
4 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	4 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	4 COLLATERAL		GUARANTEED SEATS 4 A CINDERELLA STORY 1.30, 3.30, 5.30, 7.30, 9.30, 11.30	4 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
5 A CINDERELLA STORY		5 GARFIELD		GUARANTEED SEATS 5 THE VILLAGE 2.40, 4.45, 6.50, 8.55, 11.00	5 PRINCE & ME
		6 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR			
		7 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU			



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FREE picture taking w/ John Lloyd & Bea
Plus win exciting prizes
The first thirty (30) customers who will present their NOW THAT I HAVE YOU movie ticket bought today in Glorietta 1 cinema will be accommodated during the picture taking. No need to bring a camera.
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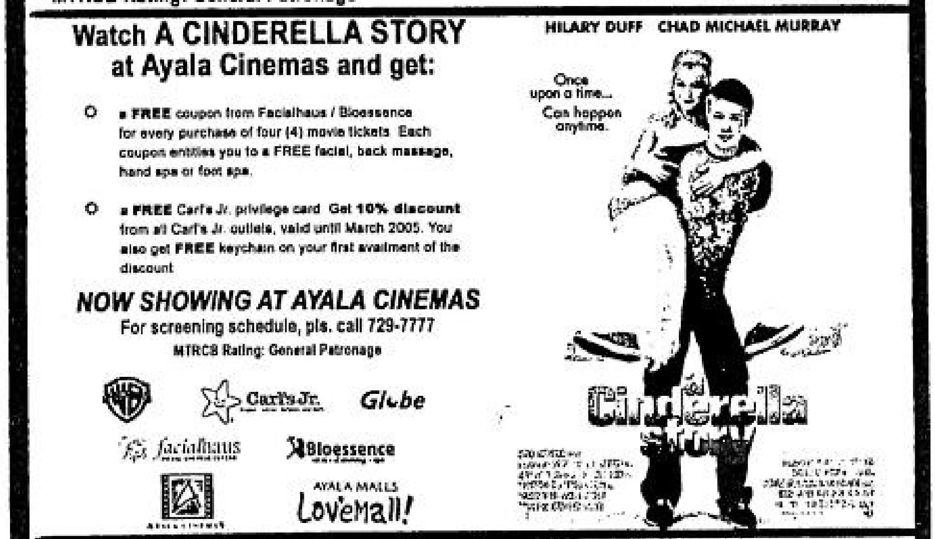

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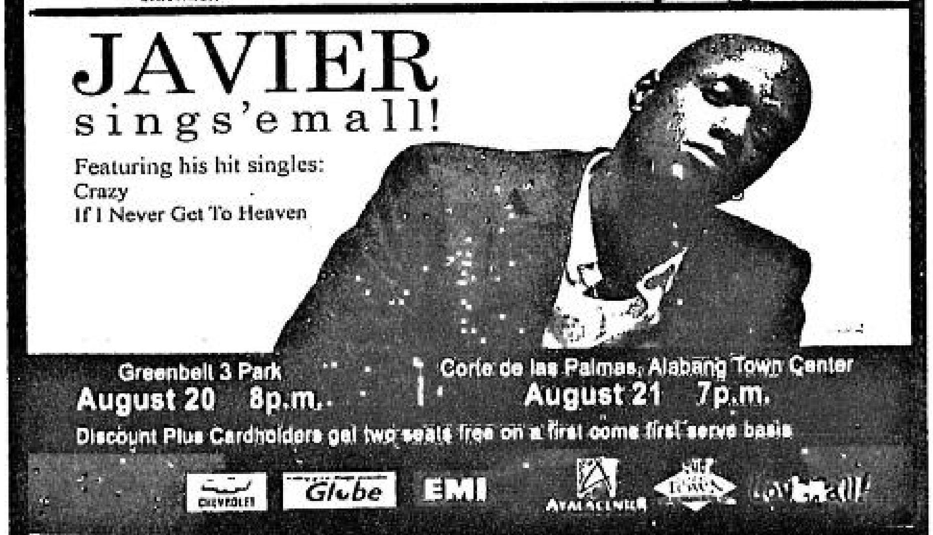
HILARY DUFF CHAD MICHAEL MURRAY
Once upon a time... Can happen anytime.
A Cinderella Story



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Greenbelt 3 Park
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Corte de las Palmas, Alabang Town Center
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It's Tsong's turn to be suspended

By Marinel R. Cruz

COMEDIAN and former Parañaque City mayor Joey Marquez has been suspended by GMA 7 for two episodes as host of the Sunday show biz talk show "S-Files" after the censors caught him using "vulgar words" on the show.

The Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) last Monday also rated "X" or "not fit for public viewing" for the second time the new ABC 5 show "Secrets" hosted by sexy star Juliana Palermo.

Marquez's suspension came a week after "Eat Bulaga" producer Television Production Exponents Inc. (Tape) suspended one of its hosts, Joey de Leon, for two months for using "foul language/double meaning words" on the noontime show. De Leon's suspension was also prompted by a complaint from the MTRCB.

A memorandum from "S-Files" program manager Redgie Magno stated that with the suspension, Marquez would not be seen in the Aug. 29 and Sept. 5. editions of the talk show.

Magno's memorandum said that on Aug. 22 on "S-Files," Marquez would "make a statement" explaining why he would be suspended for two Sundays.

INQUIRER Entertainment tried to reach Marquez. His manager, Douglas Quijano, referred this writer to GMA 7.

According to a report to MTRCB Chair Marissa Laguardia, the Aug. 1 edition of "S-Files" included a discussion of "penile enlargement," where Marquez used words like "*maliit ang bukol*," "*tampok ang tambok* portion," "*malalaking ibon*" and "*mula nang maging tarat hanggang maging parang* monkey-eating eagle."

On Aug. 8, Marquez interviewed the diminutive comedian Mahal about her new Filipino-American boyfriend. Among his questions to Mahal were "Malaki ba...? Kasya ba?"

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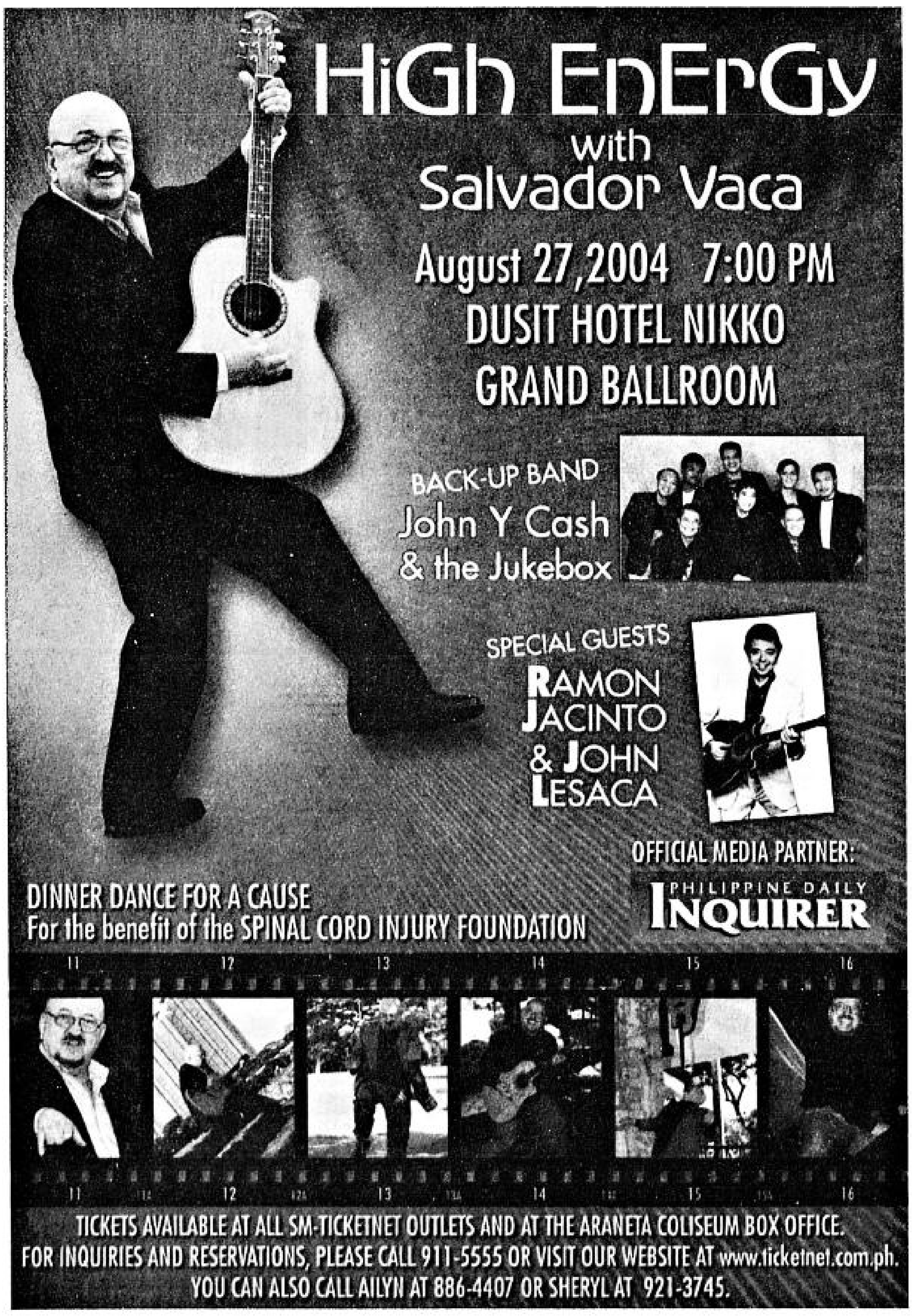

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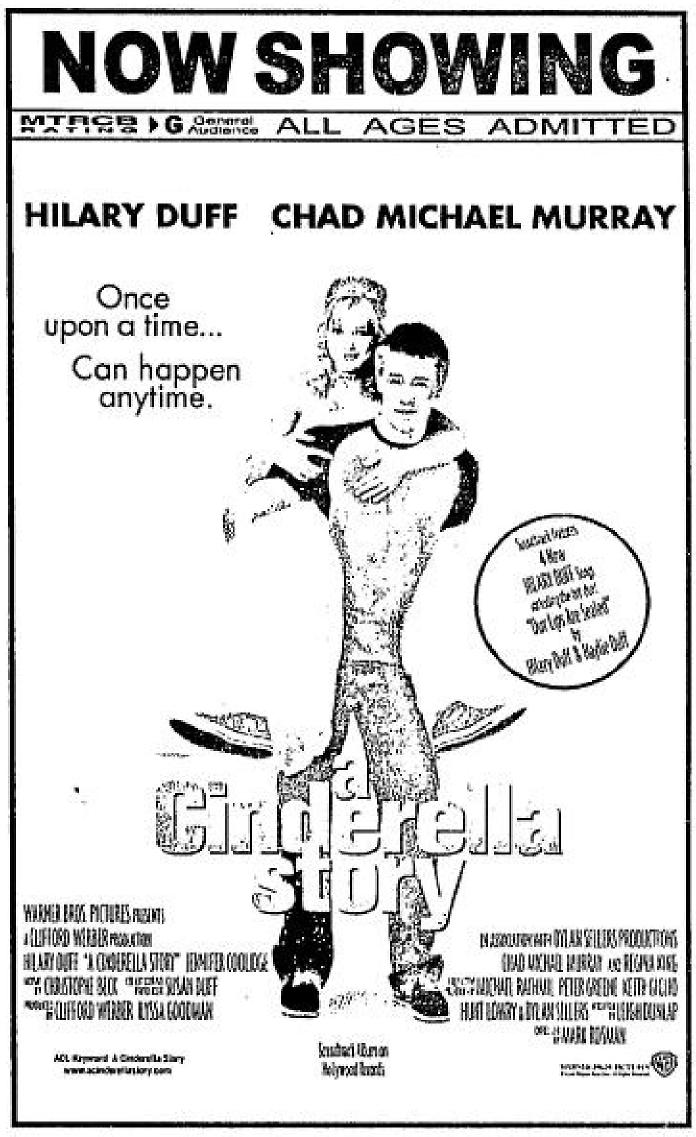

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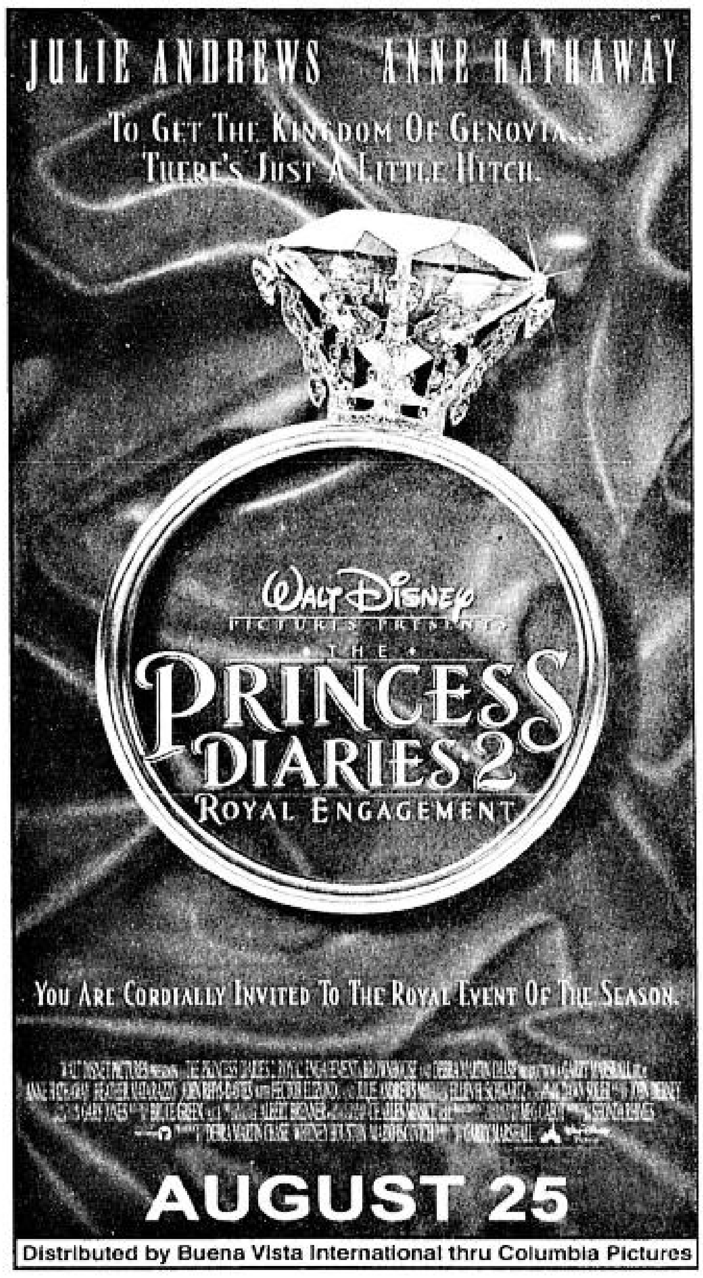

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Big jump in local pump prices looms

By Abigail L. Ho

WITH world oil prices spiraling to historic highs, the advocacy group Consumer and Oil Price Watch yesterday warned of "substantial" increases in the pump prices of petroleum products in September if the current uptrend continued.

The benchmark Dubai crude used by oil refiners Petron Corp. and Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. in pricing their products soared to $39.85 a barrel Monday, demolishing the previously set all-time high of $38.90 in Aug. 13.

The price surge pushed the Aug. 1-16 average up to $38.07 a barrel, up by almost $4 from the July average of $34.65 a barrel.

Unleaded gasoline based on the Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS) benchmark for refined petroleum products likewise jumped to $52.88 a barrel on Monday, driving up the August average to $51.27 a barrel from only $46.52 a barrel last month.

The price of MOPS-based diesel, on the other hand, also increased to $52.11 a barrel the same day, further pushing up the August average to $50.73 a barrel, more than $4 higher than the July average of $46.25 a barrel.

COPW chair Raul Concepcion noted that price movements during the week ending Aug. 6 and the one ending Aug. 13 showed an increase of 28 US cents a barrel for gasoline and 34 US cents a barrel for diesel.

Dubai crude during those two weeks posted an increase of 44 US cents a barrel, he added.

Even though Concepcion projected a "substantial" oil price increase in September if August prices would not let up, he said oil firms should take into consideration the Department of Energy's suggestion to implement more frequent price increases in smaller amounts than one big price adjustment.

He said any increase that oil companies would have to implement next month should be done on a "staggered basis" so as to cushion its impact on consumers.

CONCEPCION

He also asked oil refiners Petron and Shell to just offset their over-recoveries for gasoline with their under-recoveries for diesel instead of raising prices.

New oil players raised the prices of gasoline and diesel by 35 centavos a liter on Monday in response to the uptrend in world oil prices.

Since the beginning of the year, gasoline prices have risen eight times by a total of P5.05-P5.20 a liter, while diesel prices have gone up seven times by a total of P3.85-P4 a liter.

But yesterday, oil prices fell in Asian trading as fears of a strike in oil-rich Venezuela receded following President Hugo Chavez's victory in a referendum on his rule, dealers said.

Chavez's victory was sufficient to calm nervous investors who had earlier pushed the contract to a record $46.91 on Monday on fears of supply disruptions as violence stalled Iraq's oil exports.

The Venezuelan leader had warned an opposition victory in the referendum would lead to the privatization of the state oil firm Petroleos de Venezuela (PDVSA) and prompt oil workers to strike.

"To the countries of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, I ratify that my government guarantees the stability of the world oil market and the integration of Opec to defend the interests of our people," he said in a victory speech.

Venezuela is the world's fifth largest crude exporter with daily production of 2.5-2.6 million barrels. *With a report from AFP*

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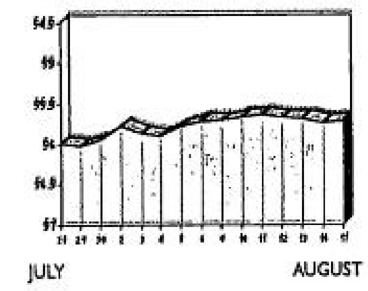

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As of 5 p.m., Aug. 17, 2004

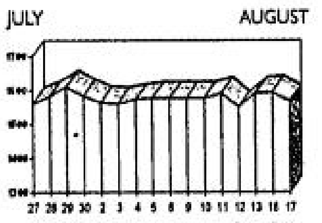
GOLD: $392.90-393.40
per ounce Hong Kong, Aug. 13, 2004

August 17, 2004 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.808865	1.000000	55.6620
Japan	Yen	0.007326	0.009057	0.5041
United Kingdom	Pound	1.489444	1.841400	102.4960
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.103707	0.128213	7.1366
Switzerland	Franc	0.652101	0.806192	44.8743
Canada	Dollar	0.618966	0.765228	42.5941
Singapore	Dollar	0.471945	0.583465	32.4768
Australia	Dollar	0.579291	0.716178	39.8639
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.145588	2.652590	147.6485
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.215692	0.266660	14.8428
Brunei	Dollar	0.470571	0.581767	32.3823
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000087	0.000108	0.0060
Thailand	Baht	0.019482	0.024085	1.3406
UAE	Dirham	0.220225	0.272264	15.1548
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.236300	68.8149
Argentina	Peso	0.268547	0.332005	18.4801
Brazil	Real	0.268547	0.332005	18.4801
Denmark	Kroner	0.134466	0.166240	9.2533
India	Rupee	0.017467	0.021594	1.2020
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.212888	0.263193	14.6498
Mexico	New Peso	0.071109	0.087912	4.8934
New Zealand	Dollar	0.536596	0.663394	36.9258
Norway	Kroner	0.120936	0.149513	8.3222
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013756	0.017007	0.9466
South Africa	Rand	0.122351	0.151263	8.4196
Korea	Won	0.000698	0.000863	0.0480
Sweden	Kroner	0.108377	0.133987	7.4580
Syria	Pound	0.022388	0.027678	1.5406
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023790	0.029412	1.6371
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000422	0.000522	0.0291

STOCK MARKET

Stocks fall on GDP worries, high oil prices

STOCKS closed at a two-week low yesterday due to concerns the economy most likely slowed in the second quarter and the threat posed by high oil prices, traders said.



(See stock market report on Page B4)

Telecom leader Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., the day's top traded issue, slid P25, or 1.92 percent, to P1,275.

Second-ranked Globe Telecom lost P40, or 4.37 percent, to P875.

The main stock index fell 28 points, or 1.76 percent, to 1,566.83 points, its lowest close since Aug. 3.

In the broader market, losers outnumbered gainers 69 to 13 while the prices of 39 issues were unchanged. Turnover increased to P682.3 million compared with P451.86 million on Monday. *Reuters*

Epira: Key to heading off power crisis

(Last of three parts)

By Abigail L. Ho

SPECIAL REPORT

REPUBLIC Act No. 9136, or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 (Epira), was meant to put order in the power sector by privatizing the National Power Corp. and injecting some competition in the market.

With Epira, government hoped to make the power sector more attractive to investors.

According to Energy Secretary Vincent Perez, allowing the private sector to acquire some of Napocor's generation assets, particularly those in Luzon and the Visayas, would result in a competitive market where each player would strive to be the most efficient and cost-effective.

It would be the consumers who would benefit in the long run, Perez said.

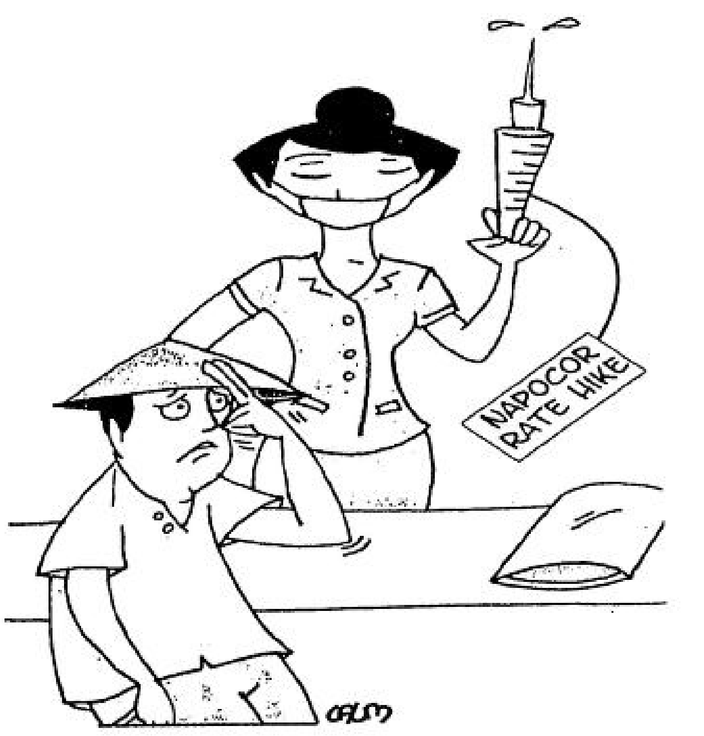
Napocor privatization

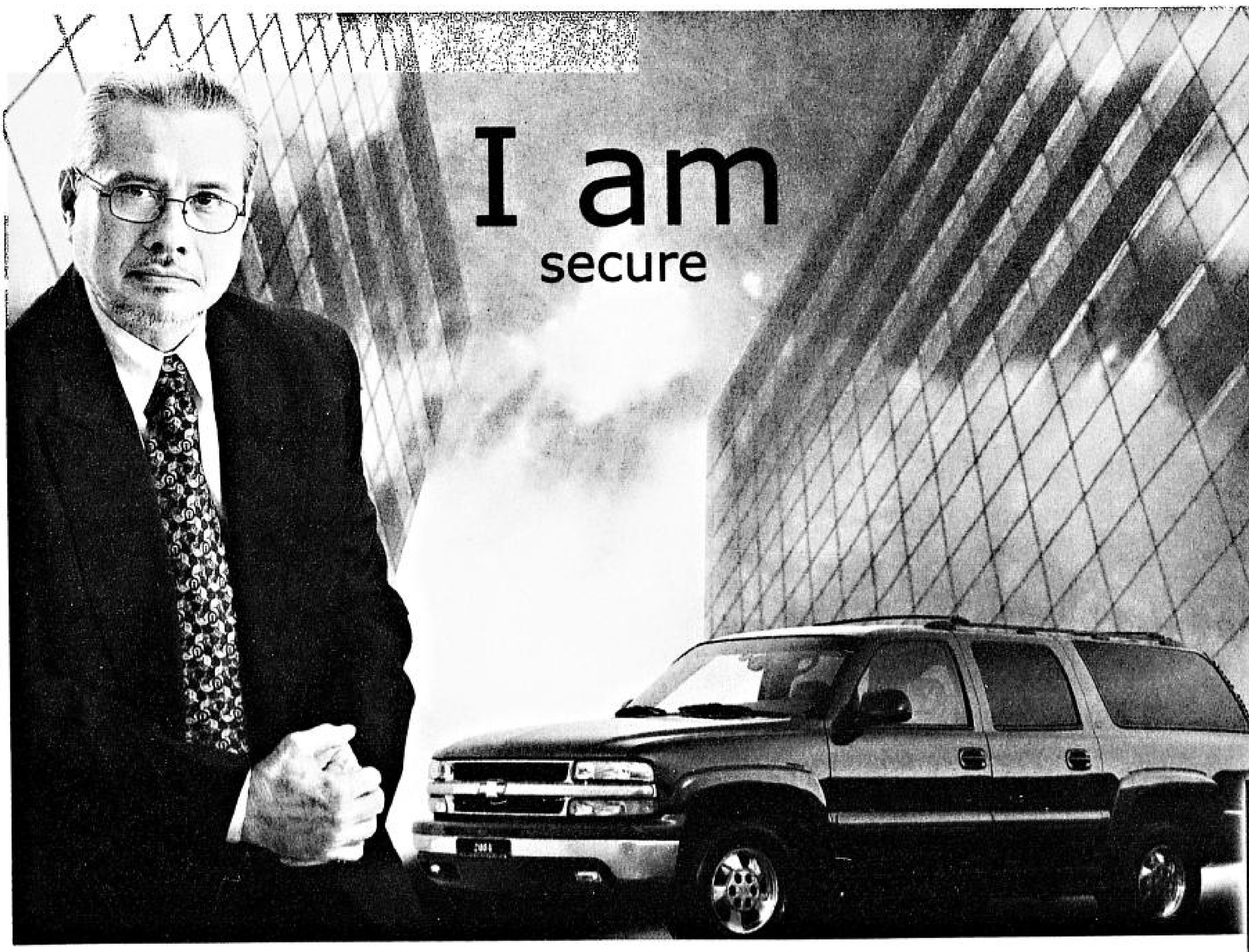
So far, the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM), the agency tasked to privatize Napocor's assets, has sold three of the 35 plants on the auction block: the 3.5-megawatt (MW) Talomo hydroelectric plant in Davao to the Aboitiz group's Hydro Electric Development Corp. for $1.37 million; the 1.6-MW Agusan hydroelectric plant in Bukidnon to the Lopezes' First Generation Holdings Corp. for $1.5 million; and the 1.8-MW Barit hydroelectric plant in Camarines Sur to Ramon Constancio for $480,000.

PSALM, at this point, has assumed a key role in averting a power crisis by restructuring and reforming the power sector.

By end-2005, PSALM would have privatized at least 70 per-

EPIRA/ B6





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RP still locked in free trade talks with China

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE PHILIPPINES, still locked in free trade talks with China, has drafted a list of 175 commodities that would be included in the so-called early harvest program between the trading partners.

According to Segfredo Serrano, Department of Agriculture undersecretary, the Chinese authorities have offered to trade 400 of their products in our country and are prepared to open up China to Philippine commodities.

The DA officials trimmed the original Chinese list of 400 commodities down to 175 to protect local farmers, vegetable growers and poultry raisers.

Although it is important for the Philippines to gain access to Mainland China which—with a population of over 1.35 billion people—offers a huge market for RP products, Philippine officials must still insist on denying the entry of Chinese vegetable, pork, chicken, rice and corn products.

"The Early Harvest Package would definitely be beneficial to the big exporters, such as the bananas and pineapple plantations here," Serrano said. "But we must emphasize that the small producers, like the vegetable producers, stand to risk much (with the entry of Chinese products)."

DA and Department of Trade and Industry officials have revived its option to be part of the Asean-China Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation.

"We are afraid that Philippine bananas and coconut will be totally left out," said incoming Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap. "We were chided by the new Chinese ambassador that we were the only Asean (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) member who did not join the early harvest program."

Yap said that since the early harvest program started in March 2003, Philippine agriculture products are losing market share to other Asean countries, specifically in coconut product exports.

Earlier, the Cabinet-level Tariff and Related Matters Committee voted to reject the Philippines' entry to the early harvest program because of China's insistence on limiting the program to Chapters 1 to 8 of its tariff code, which cover mainly unprocessed agricultural products.

The Philippines, which was supposed to submit its list of products for inclusion in the early harvest program last March 1, would continue to negotiate with China to widen the product sectors that would be granted preferred duty access to the mainland.

The DTI said that the early harvest program would have been more palatable had China agreed to open up its market to more Philippine industrial products, specifically the export winners such as motor vehicle parts and microelectronics.

The early harvest program was meant to give Asean countries advanced entry to China, which generally imposed higher tariff rates, before the start of the free trade agreement. But China has insisted on full reciprocity, that is, giving and receiving the same tariff perks as the other members of the Asean market.

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DTI bars Solid from selling cement

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE TRADE Department has ordered one of the country's largest cement makers to stop selling its products for failure to pass quality standards.

In a notice to distributors and retailers dated Aug. 12, the DTI said Solid Cement Corp., maker of the Island cement brand, was ordered "to cease and desist from selling, distributing, delivering and disposing Island Cement or any brand (made in the firm's Antipolo plant) in bulk and in bags."

The preliminary order came after DTI product tests showed that there were too much impurities in the product, thus, lessening its strength.

"We cannot risk public safety by allowing the continued distribution of substandard cement," Trade Undersecretary Adrian S. Cristobal said.

He explained that the order was a preventive measure to protect consumers while the case was being heard.

"Island Cement has failed several mechanical and chemical tests of the Bureau of Product Standards and the Department of Public Works and Highway's Bureau of Research and Standards," he added. "(That brand) must be banned from the market."

BPS director Jesus Motoomull said laboratory tests showed that Island Cement has consistently fallen below the minimum comprehensive strength required for Portland cement.

Portland cement is so named after the Isle of Portland in the English Channel, as the cement mix resembled the color of natural limestone mined from that place.

DTI data showed that as of end-2000, Solid Cement, a member of the Cemex group, was the third-largest local cement firm with a production capacity of 2.23 million metric tons a year.

The firm's plant in Antipolo City, Rizal, accounted for 8.3 percent of the country's total capacity.

Cemex Philippines' other subsidiaries are Apo Cement and Rizal Cement Co. which, respectively, have production plants in Cebu and Muntinlupa City and Binganonan in Rizal.

Overall, Cemex's Philippine operations add up to a total production capacity of 5.8 million metric tons a year.

Subic exports up 19% to $454M in first 7 months

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT ZONE—Exports from this freeport increased by at least 19 percent during the first seven months of this year, according to the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority.

SBMA Chair Felicito Payumo said exports recorded as of July this year reached $454 million, from $383 million posted in the same period last year.

"Export performance of Subic freeport-made products remains strong for the past seven months and we are confident that manufacturing firms here would maintain this upsurge turn for the rest of the year," Payumo said in a statement.

Noel Tuliao, manager of One-Stop Export Documentation Center of PhilExport-Central Luzon (OSEDC-Subic), said that in May alone, exports hit $89 million, representing a 70-percent increase over the same month last year.

The May figures were the highest during the seven-month period this year, Tuliao said.

Wistron InfoComm Philippines, a Taiwanese firm manufacturing computers, remained the top Subic exporter posting an export value of $319.7 million, accounting for 70 percent of total export earnings.

Although Wistron's export contributions dropped last year due to the global slump in demand for computers and other electronic products, the company remained the top employer among Subic freeport investors with more than 3,000 skilled workers.

The increase in export contributions was also attributed to non-electronic value-added products like processed wood, high-end garments, jewelry and even aircraft parts production, the statement said.

Top exporters during the period include Sanyo Denki, a Japanese computer micro-motor parts maker, with $28 million worth of export products and Japanese electronic manufacturing firm, Omron, which produced $22 million worth of automated teller machine (ATM) parts.

Japanese wood processor Juken Sangyo exported $18 million worth of products. *Allan Macatuno, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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Sidetracked at Citra

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

CITRA, the Indonesian company that built and operates the Skyway, is scheduled to hold a board meeting next Wednesday to discuss the fate of its current president/CEO, Cesar Quiambao.

If you believe the company grapevine, the Indonesian principals, including minority partner Metro Pacific Group, seem to have already found a replacement.

The rumored departure of Quiambao, an accountant whose fortunes hit the fast track after migrating and working for an Indonesian logging concern and marrying a local, comes in the wake of the new hard-line stance being taken by the Jakarta office on the some P50 million in "advances" extended by Citra to a Quiambao company.

That and other alleged advances have reportedly remained unpaid since the Erap years.

Quiambao is also engaged in a nasty lawsuit with his Filipino partners in Stradec, the IT holding company that has won the biometric contract for passports as well as the nationwide computerization of land titles and drivers' licenses.

The suit, now being heard in the Pasig Regional Trial Court, stemmed from the foreclosure on a P200-million borrowing by Stradec, where Quiambao was an erstwhile minority partner.

After the foreclosure, wherein 20 percent of Stradec's stake had been pledged as collateral, Quiambao ended up, voila, as the majority owner of Stradec, after having bought back from the creditor the pledged shares unknown to his Stradec partners.

Going back to Citra, the rumored boardroom realignment is apparently part of the grand plan of Metro Pacific/PLDT chair Manuel V. Pangilinan to complete the Skyway project to Alabang and, at the other end, to Balintawak, as well as upgrade the South Luzon Expressway and expand it all the way to the Batangas port.

MVP does not sit in the Citra board, but MPC president Jose Ma. Lim does.

MVP has apparently rounded up the support of the Indonesians, including their pointman, Citra chair and Bahasa-speaking ex-general Jose Magno, as well as Trade Secretary Cesar Purisima as to the importance of the infrastructure superhighway for the country and, for Citra, to finally put it on the road to profitability.

Razon to rejoice

SECOND-LINER ICTSI is lately showing off some flash that hints of the stock being a diamond in the rough.

The stock hit a high of P3.80 yesterday before closing at P3.70, from last week's P3.30, on the back of the company's disclosure that its profits doubled in the first half of the year compared to last year's.

According to speculator Bob O. de la Yuca, the market also likes the hammering that Harbour Centre, a potential competitor of ICTSI, is receiving from Sen. Miriam Santiago and the media.

Limited to small pickings in non-containerized cargo services in its new but controversial North Harbor port, Harbour Centre obtained sometime in March an opinion from the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel that it, too, can diversify into the big-game containerized cargo services.

That business currently only has two players, ICTSI and the smaller Australian-controlled Asian Terminal Inc.

Controlled by Spanish mestizo but Lebanese-looking Enrique

COCKTALES/B6

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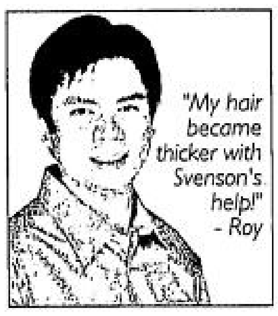
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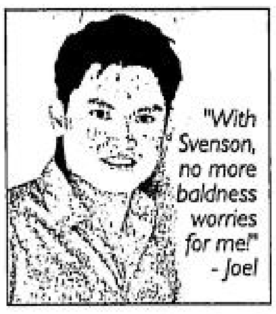
- Roy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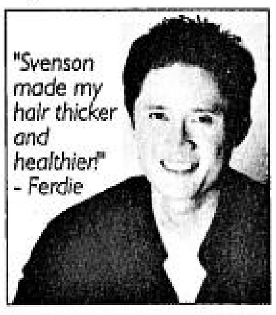
"Svenson made my hair thicker and healthier!"
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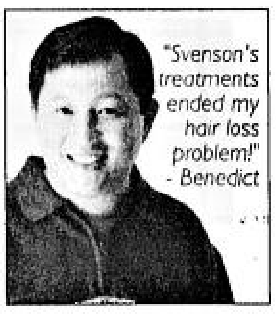
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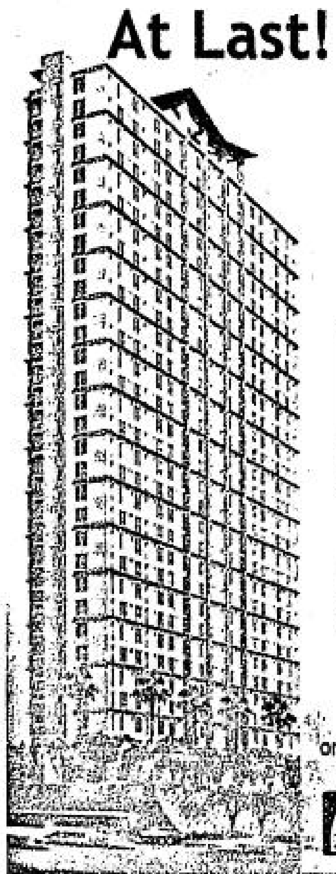

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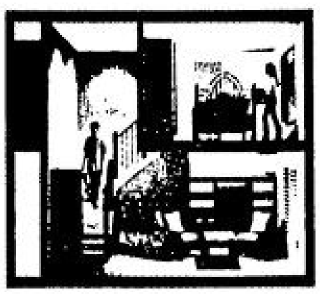

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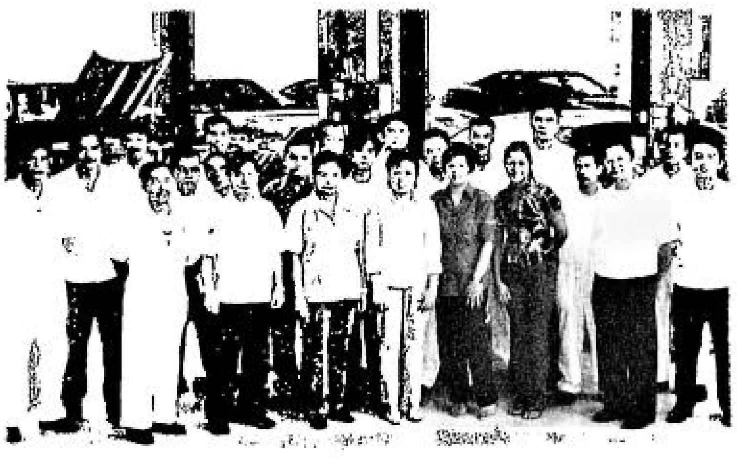

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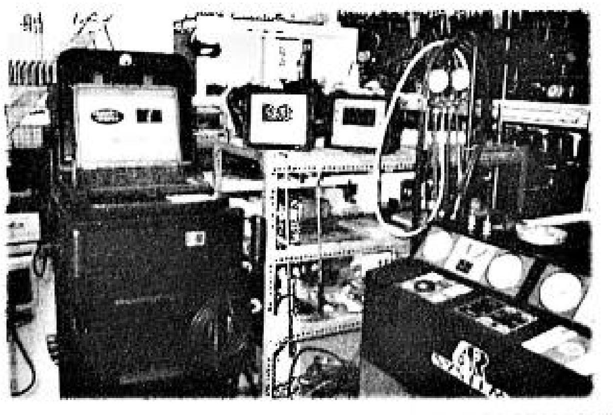

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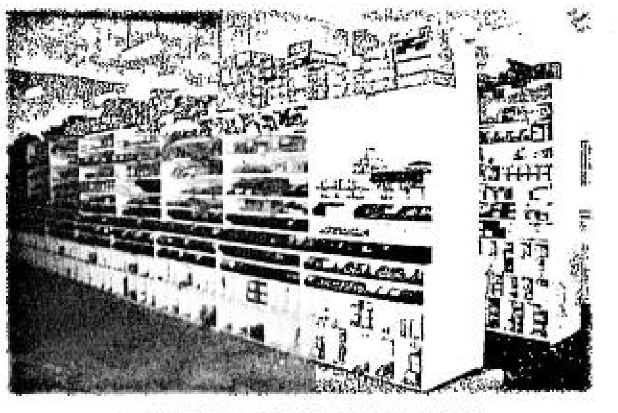

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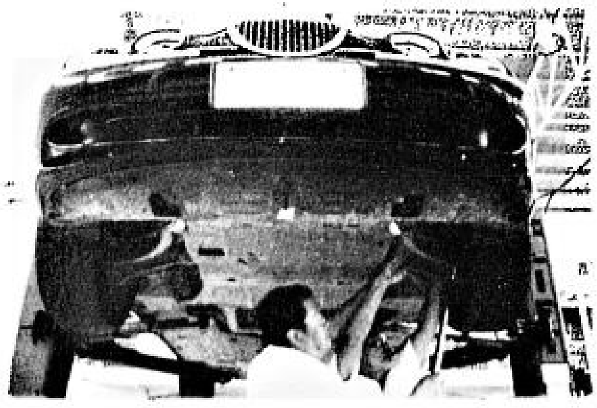

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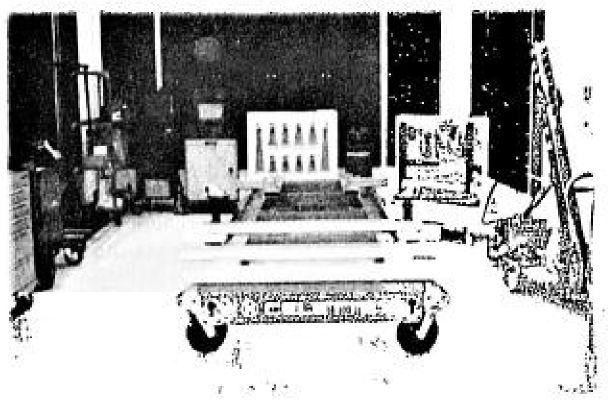

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Key reforms needed to make RP creditworthy, survey shows

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINES must accomplish 10 herculean tasks involving key reforms in its socio-economic and political structures to boost its sovereign creditworthiness, a survey of global credit rating agencies showed.

Saddled by huge debts inherited from previous regimes, the Philippines needs to establish a track record of fiscal discipline, the government's investor relations officer Cora Guidote said in a briefing yesterday.

Citing a recent survey conducted by her office among global credit rating agencies, Guidote said foremost among these tasks was to broaden the country's tax base.

Also, global rating agencies believe that the country needs to sustain improvements in the ratio of public revenue to gross domestic product and to reduce the ratio of external and government debts to GDP to boost its international credit rating.

The other "must-dos" cited by the rating agencies in the survey were the following:

- strengthen the financial sector;
- enhance regulatory and institutional effectiveness and integrity;
- privatize the National Power Corp. and rationalize its debts;
- achieve external sector competitiveness in order to increase exports and foreign investments;
- improve political stability and predictability;
- strengthen democratic institutions, and
- increase internal security.

The Philippines is currently rated one notch below investment grade by major credit rating agencies such as Moody's Investor Service, Standard & Poor's and Fitch Ratings.

Guidote said these agencies believed that recent gains were still modest and that the country was still "erratic" and "unpredictable" in attaining economic and fiscal targets.

"There's a perceived lack of fiscal discipline," she said. "Reforms still have to be institutionalized."

Guidote said the tasks identified during the survey were covered by President Macapagal-Arroyo's economic agenda but the world would await progress in their implementation.

She said the Philippines would hold its fourth international roadshow next month "to tell the world it has problems but is striving to address them."

Guidote said the roadshow would be bigger this year and would target not just the fixed income market but also foreign direct and equity investments.

The government had tapped HSBC Plc. as the global coordinator for Asia and Europe while Citigroup and JP Morgan would be the coordinators for the US leg. The roadshow will start on Sept. 20 and will cover Singapore, Hong Kong, London, Frankfurt, Zurich, Geneva, Boston and New York.

JG Summit 1st half net income down 20%

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

GOKONGWEI-LED JG Summit Holdings Inc. said its first half net income reached only P1.38 billion in the first half, lower by 20 percent from P1.72 billion in the same period last year.

The profit decline was attributed largely to losses incurred by its wireless phone business and the drop in the earnings of its financial services unit.

Consolidated revenue grew 13.2 percent to P29.85 billion in the first half from P26.4 billion last year.

Gross profit for the first half hit P9.84 billion from P7.89 billion, up 24.7 percent. Operating expenses grew 14.6 percent to P7.50 billion due to the huge expenses incurred by its wireless phone operations and expenses for the regional expansion of its foods business.

Borrowings bloated JG Summit's interest expenses by 23.6 percent to P2.91 billion from P2.36 billion.

Telecommunications arm Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc. reported a net loss of P693.4 million in the first six months, from a net loss of P478.6 million during the same period last year.

Revenue from both wireless and land line businesses rose 11.9 percent to P3.5 billion from P3.1 billion.

But the revenue gains were wiped out by huge expenses, which grew 11.9 percent to P3.2 billion. Digitel posted an operating loss of P101.1 million, higher than last year's P91 million.

Food and beverage subsidiary Universal Robina Corp. reported a 7.8-percent growth in revenue in the first semester, driven by its branded consumer foods businesses and expanding operations in Southeast Asia.

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First Metro profit drops to P369M from P1.14B

FIRST Metro Investment Corp., the investment banking arm of the Metrobank Group, recorded a drop in first-half net income to P368.9 million, from P1.14 billion during the same period last year.

Last year's income, however, was boosted by P792 million in extraordinary gains.

FMIC president Francisco Sebastian said in a statement, however, that the company was on the way to meeting its full-year income target.

"Our treasury operations continued their strong and steady performance, while the investment banking group managed the Globe Telecom and Unilever debt issues in the first semester," Sebastian said.

"We also look forward to a number of investment banking deals to materialize as a result of renewed confidence after the stabilization of our political processes," Sebastian added.

FMIC's gross revenue hit P675.2 million during the period, with treasury income contributing P386.2 million and interest income, P160.3 million.

Investment banking and investment advisory contributed a combined P65.5 million.

In July, FMIC landed among the top three selling agents of the Bureau of Treasury's retail treasury bond issue, selling over P4.5 billion in bonds.

On the private sector debt, FMIC was appointed in August as one of the issue managers of the public bond offering of conglomerate Ayala Corp. *Elizabeth Sanchez*

Ayala Plans increases trust fund by 36%

AYALA Plans Inc., one of the leading pre-need companies in the country, said it had boosted its trust fund by 36 percent to P2.203 billion in the first semester of this year, up from P1.614 billion in the same period last year.

The company report said it had P1.428 billion in its trust fund for its pension line, up 37 percent from P1.044 billion in the same period last year.

The P775.38 million in its trust fund for its education line is 36 percent more than the P571.32 million it had a year ago, the report added.

"With a fund manager (BPI Asset Management and Trust Group or BPI-AMTG) that is the largest in the country, plan holders can feel secure that Ayala Plans will be around to meet its future obligations and fulfill its promises", said Lauro L. Abaño, Ayala Plans' business director.

The company marks its tenth year of operations this year.

Ayala Plans opened two trust funds with BPI-AMTG in December 1994 with an initial amount of P400,000.

Ayala Plans' trust fund build-up is considered among the fastest in the pre-need industry, with an average trust fund growth rate of 85.7 percent per year for the last five years.

In line with its strategic expansion, Ayala Plans also infused P150 million in new capital in 2003.

In spite of the challenging investment environment, Ayala Plans continues to strengthen and manage its aggressive sales growth and marketing programs, and improve both the quality and quantity of its agency sales force.

Ayala Plans is one of the few pre-need firms in the Philippines with a trust fund that is 100 percent liquid and with zero real estate properties in the fund portfolio.

"The company has been conservative with its financial management and has consistently maintained its deposits in the trust fund at levels beyond what is required by the law," the company said.

Ayala Plans Inc. is a subsidiary of the Bank of the Philippine Islands, one of the largest banks in Southeast Asia, and a member of the Ayala Group of Companies.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of August 17, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	10,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.25	17.25	17.25	17.25	10,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	41	41	40	40	1,612,000
China Banking Corp.	535	535	539	535	900
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	39.5	39.5	39	39	25,600
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.48	0.49	0.48	0.48	1,060,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	26	26.5	25.5	25.5	130,300
Philippine National Bank	23	23	23	23	10,200
Phil. Savings Bank	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	10,100
Security Bank Corp.	21.5	21.5	21.5	21.5	26,500
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
First Metro Invest. Corp.	175	175	176	175	100
Manulife Financial Corp.	2200	2200	2200	2200	410
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	612,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1500	1500	1500	1500	1,280
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	21	21	20.5	20.5	3,400
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.65	0.66	0.65	0.66	320,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	905	905	870	875	90,580
Ipeople Inc.	1.44	1.46	1.44	1.46	138,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.036	0.036	0.035	0.036	1,400,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.48	2.48	2.48	2.48	101,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	2.65	2.65	2.55	2.6	11,441,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1300	1300	1265	1275	112,480
Ivantage Corp.	0.65	0.65	0.62	0.62	4,180,000
Philweb Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.01	0.011	13,200,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	15.25	15.25	15	15	33,000
Manila Electric Co. B	24	24	23.25	23.25	632,600
Petron Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.65	2.65	824,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	20,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	3,040,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.7	1,789,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	1,900,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.37	0.37	400,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.76	1.76	1.74	1.74	742,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3	3	3	3	14,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30	30	30	30	450,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	25	25	24.5	24.75	482,300
Swift Food Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	40,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57	57	56.5	57	42,100
San Miguel Corp. B	70	70	70	70	3,600
Universal Robina Corp.	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	30,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.29	450,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	10,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	4,000,000
Ayala Corp.	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	12,234,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	15,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.98	1	0.98	0.98	300,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	130,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.5	1.54	1.5	1.54	35,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	64,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.95	0.95	0.91	0.91	40,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	24	24.25	24	24.25	4,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	250,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.51	0.51	0.5	0.5	7,880,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	430,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.205	0.21	0.205	0.21	110,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.0575	0.0575	0.055	0.0575	1,900,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	1.2	1.28	1.08	1.22	34,571,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.03	0.03	0.028	0.028	11,000,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	50,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp	24	24	23.75	24	350,800
Global Equities Inc.	0.0725	0.0725	0.07	0.0725	17,700,000
Ionics Inc.	1.3	1.3	1.28	1.28	130,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	500,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.12	1.12	1.1	1.1	407,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	170,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.31	0.31	0.3	0.31	5,620,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	100,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	50,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.145	0.145	0.14	0.14	100,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.36	0.37	1,210,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	130,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	15,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.14	0.14	2,140,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.2	0.25	0.2	0.25	30,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.22	0.23	0.22	0.22	460,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	2.55	2.6	2.55	2.6	37,000
Interphil Labs Inc. A	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	3,000
Jardine Davies Inc.	36	36.5	36	36.5	2,100
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	50,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1	1.02	0.95	1.02	136,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.065	3,000,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.7	0.71	0.65	0.66	18,350,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	300,000
Manila Jockey Club	3.4	3.4	3.2	3.2	60,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.29	0.3	0.28	0.3	520,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	21	21	20.5	20.5	58,700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,300
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,800
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	3,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	14,900
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	8,800
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,500
PLDT 10% Pref Series Bb	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
OTHERS					
Far Eastern University	420	420	420	420	200
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.4	5.4	5.3	5.3	5,062,000
C&P Homes Inc.	0.25	0.26	0.24	0.25	1,400,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.25	0.26	0.25	0.26	4,250,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.99	1	0.95	0.95	5,600,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	200,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	500,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.085	3,000,000
SM Development Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.02	1.02	151,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.8	5.8	5.7	5.8	14,072,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0044	0.0044	0.0042	0.0042	131,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	53,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	3,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.225	0.225	0.22	0.22	1,960,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	2,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.018	0.018	0.015	0.016	752,900,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.019	0.019	0.017	0.018	817,900,000
Omico Corp.	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	276,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.37	0.38	0.37	0.37	730,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.43	710,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.125	0.13	0.125	0.13	400,000
OIL					
Interport Res.	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	1,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	1,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	61,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	330,000
Pacifica	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	21,000,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2	2.38	2	2.36	483,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	300,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	3,509,390	75,021,390.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	306,423,760	459,491,655.00
PRO	34,235,000	115,936,940.00
Mining	1,983,656,000	30,077,650.00
OIL	85,113,000	1,643,940.00
GRAND TOTALS :	2,412,937,150	682,171,575.00
AVERAGES		
Bank & Fin Svc	448.76	DOWN 8.52
Comm'l & Ind'l	2,501.92	DOWN 44.01
PRO	517.19	DOWN 5.36
Mining	1,871.71	DOWN 94.24
OIL	1.57	DOWN 0.02
SME	100.00	UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	996.57	DOWN 5.52
Composite	1,566.83	DOWN 28.00

NO. OF ADVANCES: 13, NO. OF DECLINES: 69, NO. OF UNCHANGED: 39, NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 121, NO. OF TRADES: 3,014

DISCLOSURES

NEXTSTAGE Inc. will buy First Advanced Multimedia Entertainment Inc., a proprietary and customized Internet and mobile intermediate platform company. Also, Nextstage will increase its authorized capital stock from P100 million to P170 million. It will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Oct. 1.

* * *

PETROENERGY Resources Corp. declared cash dividends of P0.20 per share in favor of stockholders of record as of Aug. 31 and will be payable on Sept. 24.

* * *

WATERFRONT Philippines Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Sept. 4, 10 a.m. at the Waterfront Cebu City Hotel. Stockholders of record as of Aug. 11 are entitled to vote at the meeting.

* * *

ON REPORTS that its bid to acquire Equitable-PCI Bank was "dead in the water," **Banco de Oro Universal Bank** clarified that the fate of the deal was still pending with the Mandaluyong City Regional Trial Court. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

China Eximbank offers loans for railway projects

By Clarissa S. Batino

CHINA'S Export-Import Bank has offered to bankroll the controversial Manila-Clark Rapid Railway System or North Rail project and the construction of a $1-billion railway system that will run from Alabang to Bicol, sources said.

A government source said the China Eximbank had expressed interest in financing Philippine National Railway's South Manila Commuter Railway system that would cover the Alabang-Bicol route.

The PNR operates the railway system that runs from Caloocan to Calamba and the one from Calamba to Bicol. However, the existing line to Bicol is in bad shape.

Sources said the Chinese and Philippine authorities have started negotiations for the financing of the new project.

China Eximbank has offered to provide a $980-million funding for the 500-kilometer project, or double the $395 million pledged for the $503-million North Rail project.

The North Rail project is being criticized for its cost, which was estimated to reach P1 billion for for every kilometer.

Transport Undersecretary Jose Cortes, who is in-charge of the North Rail project, said the cost per kilometer was P438.26 million.

Cortes said the North Rail was a double track system that would run from Caloocan to Malolos, Bulacan, spanning 64.3 km and not 32 km.

"China Eximbank has expressed willingness to provide a loan in the form of official development assistance. Officials of PNR went to Beijing to discuss China's proposal," a government source said.

A contractor based in Beijing is expected to submit a feasibility study to the National Economic and Development Authority.

Another source said the Arroyo administration wanted the Chinese government to improve its offer to PNR.

Negotiations between China and the Philippines over the PNR project would be pursued during President Arroyo's state visit to China on Sept. 2-4, according to sources.

During the visit, China Eximbank and North Rail officials are scheduled to sign a $395-million loan agreement.

The improvement of the country's infrastructure system, especially mass railway transport, forms part of the Arroyo administration's priority program.

Last May, the government tapped South Korea's multilateral lending institutions for a $50.4-million long-term loan that would cover part of the P3.6-billion rehabilitation of the PNR's southern tracks.

The first phase of the project covers the fencing of the station premises and improvement in the communications facilities.

The rehabilitation of the 32-km Caloocan-Alabang line would speed up the travel time to 30 minutes for the whole stretch.

After the upgrade, the South Manila line could carry roughly 187,000 passengers per day using 21 units of new diesel railcars to be acquired under the project. It also covers the improvement of 16 stations.

Korea's development fund will provide a $35-million loan while its Export-Import Bank will contribute $15.42 million to complete the foreign component of the project financing. The government will provide the local component equivalent to $14.26 million to secure right-of-way and provide infrastructure support.

8 firms vie for PNOC's gas pipeline venture

By Abigail L. Ho

EIGHT foreign firms with local partners have expressed plans to undertake the engineering and design work of the $100-million Batangas-Manila (BatMan-1) natural gas pipeline project of the Philippine National Oil Co.-Exploration Corp.

These include Pacific Consultants International Inc. and JGC Philippines; Worley Pty. Ltd. and Maunsell; Mott MacDonald; Gulf Interstate Engineering; CB&I John Brown; Engineers India Ltd.; JP Kenny Pty. Ltd. and the LG International-Hyundai-Korea Gas Corp. consortium.

PNOC-EC external relations head Rudolph Dimen said the state firm had started doing a "quality, cost-based evaluation" of the submitted bids, which would involve an assessment of their technical and financial aspects.

The evaluation of the bids should be completed in a month's time, he said.

The front-end engineering design of the BatMan-1 project involves drawing up the technical details of the gas pipeline.

Last year, PNOC-EC started acquiring rights-of-way for the project so that the use of government property could be maximized in the design of the BatMan-1 route.

"The FEED is expected to commence during the last quarter of 2004 and will last for about seven months," Dimen said. "After this is completed, PNOC-EC will be coming out with the engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) tender package for BatMan-1."

He said the EPC package should be issued by the third quarter of next year.

Agents and Brokers' are cordially invited to attend our BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY SEMINAR to be held at Vineyard Clubhouse , Dasmariñas, Cavite on August 21, 2004 from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm

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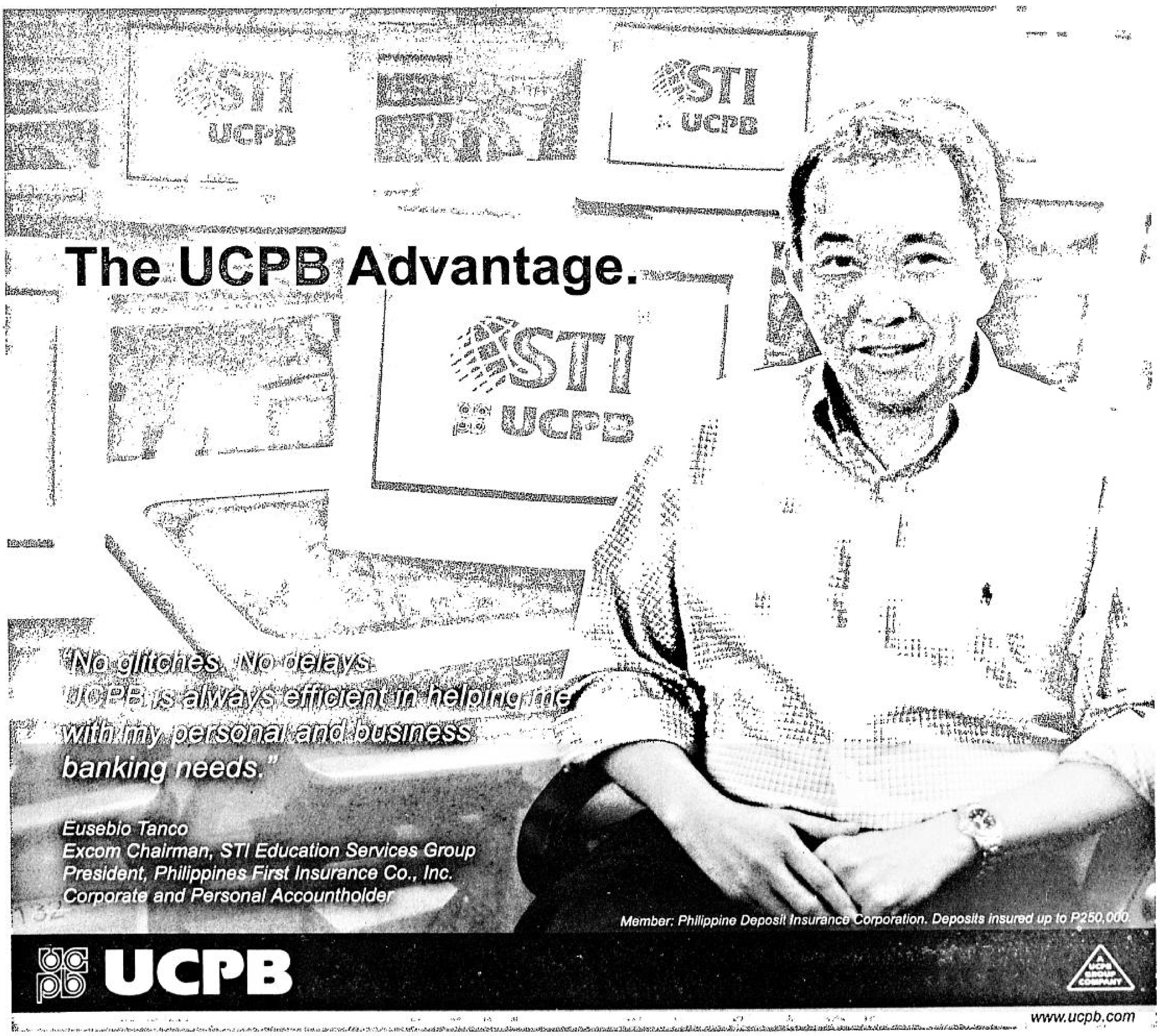

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Piatco seen seeking $520M in compensation for Naia project

By Clarissa S. Batino

PHILIPPINE International Air Terminals Co. (Piatco) is seeking from the Arroyol administration at least $520 million in compensation for putting up the Naia Terminal-3 facility.

The company, according to sources, would also ask for additional compensation to cover damages and some return on its equity.

Piatco said it spent $550 million in building the mothballed facility. During the ongoing arbitration hearings in Singapore, the company had expressed willingness to accept a slightly smaller amount of $520 to $535 million.

"But the amount covers only the cost of the facility. Under the BOT law, just compensation includes damages and return on equity," said a company source.

The Arroyo administration had offered to pay Piatco $350 million so it could operate the new Naia terminal after the Supreme Court nullified Piatco's contract with the government.

But Piatco had declined the offer, saying it was not enough to cover its cost. Due to the impasse, the new airport terminal has been mothballed indefinitely.

Piatco filed an arbitration case before the Paris-based International Chamber of Commerce to recover its investments and hearings have started in Singapore.

Piatco's German partner, Fraport AG, filed a similar case with the World Bank's International Center for Settlement of Investment Disputes. The German firm is seeking reimbursement of its $425-million investment in the Naia Terminal-3 project.

Piatco is 60 percent owned by the Cheng family, 30 percent by Fraport, and 10 percent by Nissho Iwai Corp. of Japan. The company said it would have to pay $350 million to Takenaka International Corp., a Japan-based contractor tapped to build the facility.

Piatco is being accused of violating anti-dummy provisions of the law after allowing German firm Fraport to own 61 percent of Piatco.

But Piatco vice president and spokesperson Moises Tolentino said the anti-dummy charges being prepared by the National Bureau of Investigation was moot and weak. He said the extent of Fraport's ownership in the Filipino company was no longer an issue after the Supreme Court nullified Piatco's contract with the government in May 2003.

Companies engaged in public utility must limit foreign ownership to no more than 40 percent.

Fraport has a 30-percent direct ownership in Piatco, according to Tolentino, but it owns about 40 percent in the three of the four Filipino companies controlling the company.

"Fraport claims it has about 61 percent in Piatco but I believe this includes everything including the loans," said Tolentino

He noted that the anti-dummy law implied that there was secrecy in the corporate structure, which he claimed was not the case with Piatco.

"There was some corporate layering which was no longer prohibited. We maintain that even with Fraport's ownership in the Filipino companies, the 60-percent control remained with the Filipino owners led by the Cheng family," Tolentino said.

The Piatco official said he suspected that recent reports reviving the anti-dummy case were related to the coming deadline set by the international arbitration court in Singapore for the parties to submit their respective positions.

SBMA remits ₱1.5B in taxes to gov't

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE SUBIC Bay Freeport has remitted to the national coffers a total of P1.5 billion in revenues from tax collection for the first half of 2004.

Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority Chair Felicito C. Payumo said the amount meant tax collections increased 7 percent compared with the first six months of 2003.

Payumo said Subic's positive tax performance for the first quarter assured the increase for the entire semester.

According to the Bureau of Customs, P1.2 billion of the cash collection from January to June came from domestic and foreign ship calls, transshipment operations and taxes and duties paid for by Freeport investors for the importation of heavy equipment and motor vehicles.

Also, the Bureau of Internal Revenue reported that some P316.6 million was raised from its tax collection within the Subic Bay Freeport. The figure represented an increase of 0.5 percent against the BIR's collection in the first half of last year.

The agency's local office said almost the entire collection for the first semester came from withheld taxes of more than 58,000 Freeport workers and the employees of SBMA and its subsidiary, Freeport Service Corp.

Payumo said the SBMA was aiming to double its contribution to the national treasury for this year.

"So far, the increased (business activities) in the freeport has boosted collections from P2.8 billion in 1998 to P3.3 billion in 2003," he said.

The official added that over the same period, combined BOC and BIR collections have accumulated to P26.6 billion or 30 times the equity contribution of the national government to the SBMA.

The local Customs office said another P1.5 billion worth of non-cash collection was recorded in the first half of this year. The amount meant a 1,067-percent increase from only P132 million in the same period of 2003.

The non-cash revenue came from deferred payments and government-to-government transactions like importation made by the National Food Authority and the Department of Public Works and Highways.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE
GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES
Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City
Telefax Nr 421-2327; 911-6001 Loc 6592
website: www.afp.mil.ph
email: pid@info.com.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Armed Forces of the Philippines invites all interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid in the single-stage bid process for the **Supply and Delivery of two units of Rigid Hull Inflatable Boat** for the Philippine Navy with an approved budget ceiling of **Thirty Eight Million Four Hundred Thousand Pesos (Php 38,400,000.00)**. Budget is chargeable against the AFP Modernization Program Funds.

Only bids from manufacturers or their duly authorized representatives of the Rigid Hull Inflatable Boat shall be entertained.

Bid documents are available for issuance starting **August 18, 2004 until September 23, 2004** during office hours at the BAC Secretariat, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Capability, Materiel and Technology Development, J9, GHQ, AFP, 3rd Floor, Bulwagang Mabini, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City. The bid documents shall be issued upon payment of a. **Three Thousand Eight Hundred (Php 3,800.00)** fee, which is not refundable. The form of payment shall be in cash or cashier's check in favor of the AFP.

A Special Power of Attorney, issued by the prospective bidder, authorizing its representative to purchase the bid documents in its behalf, shall be required before issuance of said documents.

A Pre-Bid Conference will be held on **September 9, 2004 at 1:30 PM** (local time) at the **Silid Panday Pira**, 1st Floor, Bulwagang Mabini, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City. Bidders are encouraged to submit their query/ies, if any, in writing to the BAC Secretariat seven (7) days prior to the Pre-Bid Conference.

Deadline for submission of bid envelopes is on **September 24, 2004 at 9:00 AM** (local time) and immediately followed by the opening of bids at the Silid Panday Pira.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines reserves the right to reject any or all bids based on the grounds for disqualification specified in RA 9184 without assuming any obligation whatsoever for expenses or losses that may be incurred by the bidder(s) in the preparation of the bid.

(Original Signed)
REYNALDO D RIVERA
Major General, AFP
Chairman, AFP-BAC

(PDI – August 18 & 25, 2004)

Epira: Key to heading off power crisis

From page B1

cent of Napocor gencos in Luzon and the Visayas.

Perez said the competition that would come as a result of Napocor's privatization would result in more reasonable and stable power rates.

But Perez pointed out that at this point, there was no other recourse but to raise power rates. He said no investor would let go of huge sums of money for new capacity while Napocor was offering artificially low rates.

Former Energy Secretary Francisco Viray said that an increase of Napocor's rates might be the key in averting a power crisis as this would pave the way for the entry of more investors into the power industry.

Napocor's highly subsidized rates, he said, posed an obstacle to the state firm's privatization as well as to the installation of new capacity.

"Napocor's generation rates are highly subsidized and artificially low," Viray said. "They are not at market level. The private sector welcomes the Napocor-PSALM rate hike petition."

Perez said that the burden of higher power rates should be borne by electricity consumers. He added that the next 18 to 24 months were crucial as the country would be entering a critical period in power consumption.

Stability of prices, supply

Hiking Napocor's rates at this time, Viray said, would ensure the eventual stability of power supply and prices.

"Short-term pain for long-term gain" was how the former energy czar described what power users would have to go through to enjoy the stable rates of the future.

He said that with the entry of the private sector, the resulting competition would ultimately result in lower prices.

The implementation of the wholesale electricity spot market (WESM), for example, could lead to the stabilization of power rates, Viray said.

Within five years upon the implementation of WESM, according to the Epira, all distribution utilities should source at least 10 percent of their supply requirements from the spot market. Bilateral power contracts would provide for the rest of their supply.

Perez said the WESM should operate commercially by January 2006.

With power generators trading their supply in a spot market, Viray said prices should stabilize within a certain period.

But Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) spokesperson Renato Reyes Jr. is not impressed by these claims.

The WESM, he said, could be turned into a venue for power producers to collude on pricing, paving the way for higher power rates instead of more stable prices.

"There's no assurance that rates will go down," Reyes said. "The profit motive of the (independent power producers) will always be the dominant factor, not public interest."

Other solutions

Despite criticisms, the government is forging ahead with the privatization of Napocor, raising the state firm's rates to attract investors to the sector.

According to Perez, government has also been exploring other ways to avert a power crisis. So far, the authorities have come up with the proposal to privatize the National Transmission Corp., as well as the establishment of guidelines to make distribution utilities and electric cooperatives more viable.

The authorities hope to introduce a performance-based rate-making methodology for power distributors—much like the mechanism being used for Transco. Once the mechanism is in place, the rates that distribution utilities would charge their customers would depend on how they actually perform as seen in their systems loss levels and the frequency of power interruptions within their areas.

The ERC would also come out with guidelines that would determine how much a power distributor could pass on its systems losses to consumers, and how much it should shoulder. Systems losses have a direct effect on power rates so these should be monitored very closely, Perez said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo also unveiled her energy independence and savings plan, which was part of her five-point agenda she announced in July.

Reforming the power sector via the privatization of Napocor and Transco were at the top of her list.

"The country cannot be forever saddled with Napocor's debts, nor should our people be forever burdened by the high cost of electricity," the President said in a recent speech. "That's why we have to reform the power sector."

Ms Arroyo also placed much emphasis on the development of the country's indigenous energy resources to make the Philippines 60-percent self-sufficient by 2010.

To this end, she said more oil and gas explorations should be pursued. New and renewable energy sources should also be tapped, particularly the wind, solar, biomass and ocean resources.

The country also has a goal of being the world's top geothermal power producer and the region's top wind power generator.

Ms Arroyo also revived plans of converting the mothballed 620-MW Bataan Nuclear Power Plant into a natural gas-fired facility. This met much criticism from various sectors because of the huge cost it would entail—about $600 million, based on an in-house study done by Korea Electric Power Corp. several years back.

But the President said her energy reform package would still be on track with or without the Bataan nuclear plant.

Time still on our side

All things considered, Perez said there was still a big chance that the country could avert the plunge into darkness.

In 2005, a power shortfall is expected to hit Mindanao. Luzon and the Visayas will follow in 2008.

The implementation of the Epira, the roadmap to achieving a reformed and restructured power sector, has to be taken seriously, Perez stressed.

"The roadmap is there," Perez said. "We just have to briskly move forward down that roadmap."

PSALM president Raphael Lotilla is likewise optimistic that the country would not plunge into darkness again.

"Time, right now, is still on our side," Lotilla said. "We still have time in which to avoid panic planning. The thing with history is that you learn from it. We've learned our lessons."

But still, time is of the essence, he said. Planning, getting funding, and actually building power plants is no easy task. A lead time of three to four years is necessary.

The power industry is now at a crossroad, this being a critical year for the privatization efforts of government as well as its bid to attract players to invest in the power sector.

This year will also see the government struggling to balance the interest of state with the welfare of the public. While a rate hike and debt absorption for the bleeding Napocor are necessary, the needs of the consumers for affordable and accessible electricity is still there.

Promises and commitments, skepticism and cynicism—these are what the authorities, the power industry players and electricity consumers have to deal with in the coming months.

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Department of National Defense

INVITATION TO BID

The Office of the Secretary of National Defense (OSND) invites interested parties to bid for the following requirements for CY-2004.

FORMAL BID NO.	GOODS	APPROVED BUDGET	OPENING OF BIDS
FB-001-04	Computer Supplies	P 1,500,000.00	Sep. 08, '04: 9:00 AM
FB-002-04	Office Supplies	P 1,800,500.00	Sep. 08, '04: 10:00 AM
FB-003-04	Janitorial Supplies	P 203,000.00	Sep. 08, '04: 11:00 AM
FB-004-04	Aircon Supplies/Materials	P 120,000.00	Sep. 08, '04: 1:30 PM
FB-005-04	Spare parts for ICT Equipment	P 1,400,000.00	Sep. 08, '04: 2:30 PM
FB-006-04	Printing of Official Forms	P 250,000.00	Sep. 08, '04: 3:30 PM
FB-007-04	Construction Supplies and materials	P 850,000.00	Sep. 09, '04: 9:00 AM
FB-008-04	Vehicle Spare parts	P 2,550,000.00	Sep. 09, '04: 11:00 AM
FB-009-04	Medicines (Medical/Dental)	P 3,900,000.00	Sep. 09, '04: 1:30 PM
FB-010-04	Medical Supplies	P 50,000.00	Sep. 09, '04: 2:30 PM
FB-011-04	Dental Medicines/Supplies	P 1,820,000.00	Sep. 09, '04: 3:30 PM
	REPAIRS/CONSTRUCTION		
FB-012-04	Repair/rehabilitation of 15 units Mini Cruiser	P 1,170,000.00	Sep. 10, '04: 9:00 AM
FB-013-04	General body repair & painting of 3 units Staff Cars	P 150,000.00	Sep. 10, '04: 10:00 AM
FB-014-04	Construction of DISG Motor pool	P 380,000.00	Sep. 10, '04: 10:30 AM
FB-015-04	Construction of DISG Armory room	P 250,000.00	Sep. 10, '04: 11:00 AM
	SERVICES		
FB-016-04	Subscription of Newspapers	P 256,710.00	Sep. 10, '04: 1:00 PM
FB-017-04	Pest Control	P 136,500.00	Sep. 10, '04: 1:30 PM
FB-018-04	Janitorial services	P 949,600.00	Sep. 10, '04: 2:00 PM
FB-019-04	Purified water	P 147,840.00	Sep. 10, '04: 3:00 PM
FB-020-04	Rental of Copier Machines	P 924,000.00	Sep. 10, '04: 4:00 PM
FB-021-04	Maintenance of Aircon units	P 239,584.00	Sep. 10, '04: 4:30 PM

Eligibility Requirements, Terms of Reference/Technical Specifications and bidding forms are available at the BAC-DND Secretariat at the ground floor of DND Building, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City. Copies of the same shall be made available at the cost of P300.00 or .01% of the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC), whichever is higher. For more information you may visit and/or contact the BAC-TWG, Administrative Services, OSND, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City, Telephone number 911-8118.

A pre-bid conference is scheduled on September 1, 2004 from 8:30 to 10:30 AM for Goods, 10:30 to 12:00 noon for Repair/Construction and 2:00 to 3:30 PM for Services at the Department of National Defense Training Center, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City.

The deadline for submission of bids shall be on the date of the above-mentioned scheduled bidding to be followed by the opening of bids at the Department of National Defense Training Center, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City.

The OSND reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any formality and award the Contract to the bidders whose proposal is the most advantageous to the government as evaluated by the OSND Single Bids and Awards Committee (OSND Single BAC).

(Sgd.) **ATTY. JOSE N. FERRER JR**
Assistant Secretary
Chairman, Single Bids & Awards Committee

(PDI · August 18 & 25, 2004)

Cocktales

From page B3

Razon Jr., ICTSI derives 64 percent of its consolidated revenues from the Manila operations, but that share should go down to about 50 percent once the revenues from the much larger Baltic operations kick in by the second half, and to less than half by 2005.

If this scenario plays out, ICTSI would be less dependent on its North Harbor operations for its yearly cash dividends and could even discount the imagined Harbour Centre threat.

No wonder former San Miguel CEO Andres Soriano III, an ICTSI director, can now afford to stay up late and work the party crowd at Nuvo like a newly recycled bachelor.

Chicken a la thief

KEEP an eagle eye on your bags, especially when dining in busy restaurants.

The balikbayan relatives of impresario Rose Marie Arenas failed to take this simple precaution last week while wolfing down a fried chicken dinner and other Filipino dishes at Max's Greenbelt branch.

The US-based relatives were distracted all the more when a waiter dropped a tray, causing everybody's heads to turn.

To make a long story short, the Arenas relatives lost a leather bag containing a small fortune in pesos and US dollars, as well as three credits cards and a Nevada driver's license.

When the Arenas relatives reported the crime to the police, the officer on case even volunteered that the day before, three Brazilian tourists complained of having lost a bundle of cash in the same restaurant.

Heard through the grapevine

SSS Chair Bernardino Abes is being transferred to the Government Service Insurance System to replace Erap-appointed chair Hermogenes Concepcion Jr., whose term had expired on June 30.

A retired general who had been sounded off to replace Abes in SSS has declined the Malacañang offer.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com)

Tokyo shares up but oil worries weigh on Asia

SINGAPORE—Japanese shares rebounded from three-month lows on Tuesday but stubbornly high oil prices and concern over their impact on corporate earnings capped gains.

Crude prices, which have risen more than 40 percent this year, were steady just above $46 a barrel after slipping from record highs of $46.91 hit on Monday.

The drop in oil had boosted most Asian markets early in the day.

Asian share markets were mixed, with Tokyo's Nikkei stock average closing up 0.4 percent at 10,725.97, off three-month lows hit on Monday after weak Japanese GDP data released on Friday.

Honda Motor rose 1.8 percent, while electronics giant Sony Corp. climbed 1.1 percent.

MSCI's broadest index of Asia Pacific shares outside Japan had risen 0.2 percent by 0630 GMT.

Stock benchmarks rose 0.5 percent in Hong Kong, and 0.4 percent in Australia and 0.3 percent in Singapore. Taiwan dipped 0.2 percent.

South Korean shares fell 0.4 percent, weighed down by a 2.6-percent drop in Hyundai Motor Co. after Daimler-Chrysler said it had sold its 10.5-percent stake in the car maker for over $900 million.

The dollar firmed in New York after a report that net capital inflows totaled $71.8 billion in June, up from an upwardly revised net inflow of $65.2 billion in May.

The dollar was at 110.45 yen, unchanged from late US trade, supported by a recovery in Japanese shares.

Traders will focus on a series of data to be released late yesterday, including US consumer price data, industrial production and housing starts, to gauge the strength of the US economy. Global share markets have seen volatile trade in recent weeks, rattled by record oil prices, a series of broker downgrades on chip companies and disappointing US data, which has raised concerns about the health of the world's largest economy.

Easing oil prices, combined with some upbeat corporate outlooks, fueled a broad-based rally on Wall Street on Monday. *Reuters*

Oil prices slip below $46

SINGAPORE—Oil prices fell $1 below record highs on Tuesday as fears over supply disruptions in Venezuela eased after President Hugo Chavez won a vote on his rule.

But traders said an expected dip in US crude oil stocks, further disruption to Iraq's oil flow and warnings that Russian firm YUKOS' financial crisis could eventually cut into oil exports, could see prices test new highs yet again.

The market has set new records in all but one of the last 12 trading sessions.

US light crude oil for September shed 7 cents to $45.98 a barrel, after striking $46.91 on Monday, the highest in the 21-year history of the New York Mercantile Exchange contract.

London Brent crude for August, which expired on Monday, had also hit a new record at $44.11, before ending down 21 cents at $43.67 a barrel on Monday. The new prompt-month October contract was down 29 cents at $42.40 on Tuesday.

"US oil prices have already gone above $45 as we had predicted. Anything above that level is overbought and we could see a correction," said Tetsu Emori, chief commodities strategist at Mitsui Bussan Futures in Tokyo.

Oil is up more than $10 a barrel since the start of the year. In real terms, adjusted for inflation, prices are still well below 1980's peak of $80, following the Iranian revolution.

But average prices for the year to date are near matching those of 1974, the first oil shock, when crude averaged an inflation-adjusted $43 during the Arab oil embargo. *Reuters*

Terror biggest threat to US

WASHINGTON—Terrorism poses the biggest short-term threat to the US economy, a panel of top business economists said in a survey released Tuesday.

They called on the president elected Nov. 2—whether President George W. Bush or his Democratic challenger John Kerry—to devote the biggest share of his time to the menace.

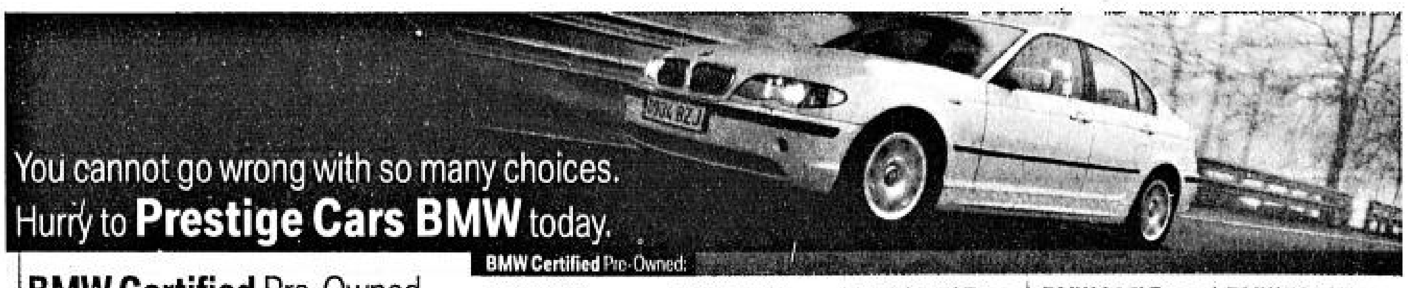
A quarterly survey of 172 members of the National Association of Business Economists found the risk of terrorism moving sharply up the agenda of Corporate America.

Forty percent of respondents in the August survey said terrorism was the biggest short-term risk for the US economy, up from 19 percent in the previous survey in March.

The budget deficit was chosen by 23 percent of respondents as the main economic threat.

"Terrorism produces the greatest short-term risk to the economy, and that is where NABE's members believe the next president should spend most his effort," said NABE president Duncan Meldrum.

Over the longer term, the greatest risk to the US economy was the growing proportion of elderly in the population and the cost of their medical care, the NABE panel said. *AFP*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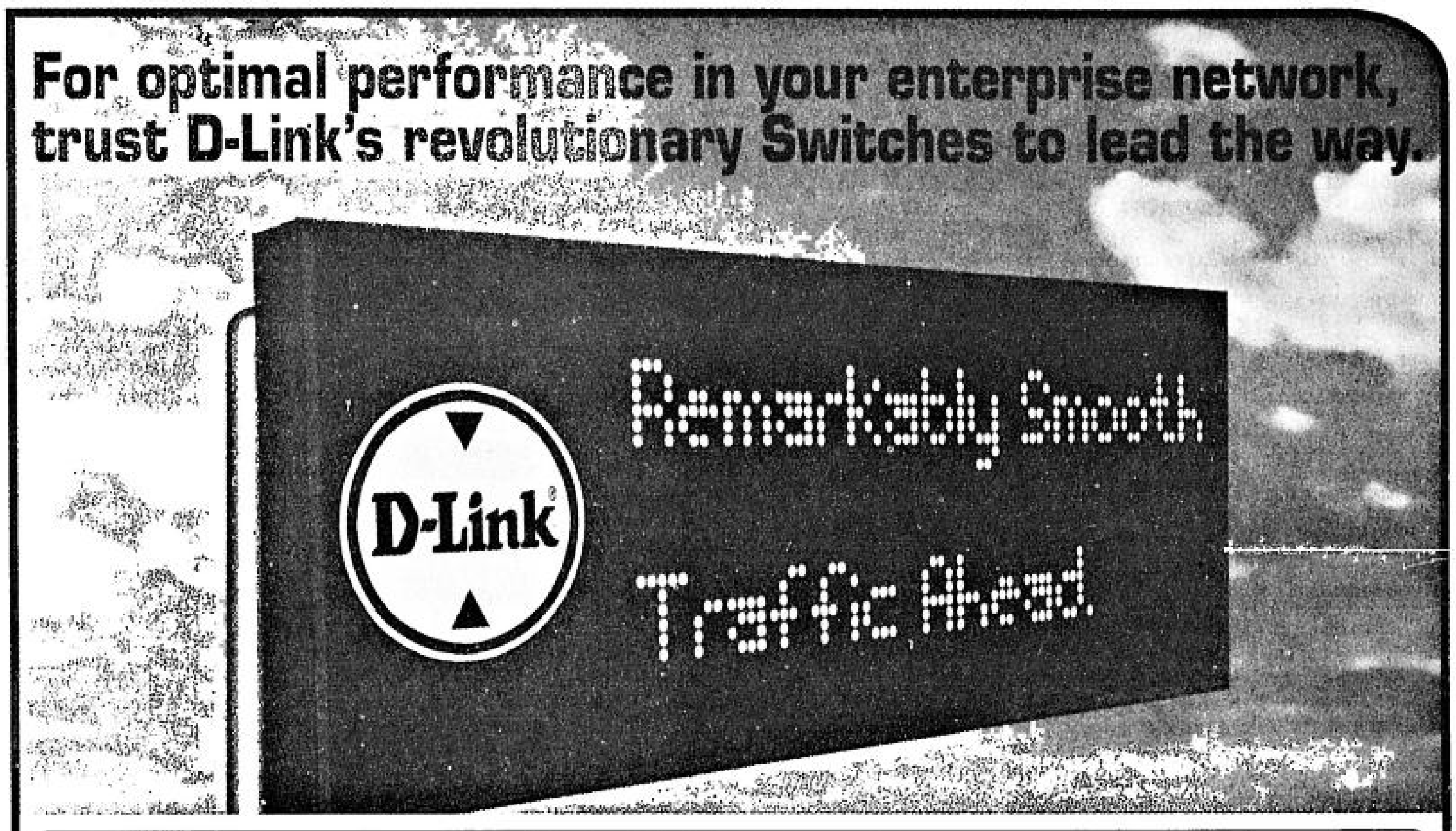

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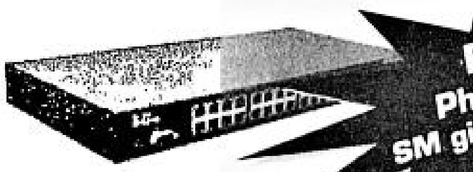
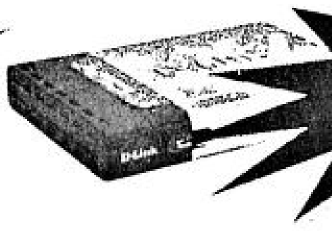

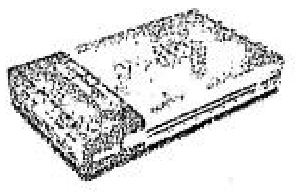
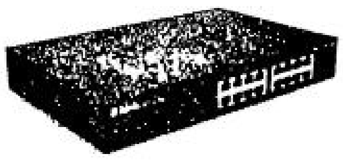

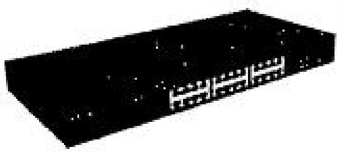

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MKTI 8903959 • 8902188

LOAN & MORTGAGE

2% W/O TAKING CAR 3677523/24

BUSN DOC OFW 524-3197

OFFICE SPACE FOR RENT

MALATE MLA 526-8048

MAKATI

OFFICE SPACES FOR LEASE (44m [illegible]) [illegible]

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE OR RENT

HOUSE & LOT

RENT TO OWN 150m2 Bung 3BR with Grge with Tel. Sta Mesa 6955643

QUEZON CITY

ACROPOLIS HSES sale/rent 3-4BR @P50-120T/mo rent P16-25M sale 6337601-03

TRANSPORTATION FOR SALE

CARS

HONDA

98 CIVIC SIR RED M/T 430T NEG 09175334950

L300 Exceed 24Kms 2003 Honda Civic 2002 34Kms 0927-4726181 / 770-4856

ISUZU

01 FUEGO 4X4 AT ALL ORIG. 635T BLACK 09174632459

MITSUBISHI

RUSH SALE LANCER GLXI SPORTY LOOK Floaded 2727813

NISSAN

91 Nissan Pathfinder Duties Taxes Unpaid Call Susan 812-6904

OTHER CAR BRANDS

Land Cruiser Pajero Surf Town-Lite-Hi Ace Vanette Delica Serena Terrano Rvr Estima Prado etc 7127539

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CARS FOR RENT

CarsVans CoasterBus 422-9296

CARS/VANS/BRIDAL 8969956

Cheap Van Rental 9330311

NISSAN Urvan 0917-5444721

P800/L3 9136710 / 4333682

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1.5% Fast Car Loan 3677523/24

1-2% Car Loan 0917-8161276

1.5% 1HR CAR LOAN 3743803

1.5% Easy Carloan 7815352/55

1.5% Fast Car Loan 6567685

1.5% Fast Car Loan 6560140

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3732081-82

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3650974/75

1.5% w/oTaking Car 7228942-43

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CAR LOAN

•1HR Fast Car Loan 7125202•

2% w/o taking car 7880183-84

2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

2% w/oTaking Car 8959454

2% w/oTaking Car 8870490/95

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

BUY/SELL

EDUC PLAN Gie 7800106

EDUC'L PLAN Dang 8061574

HEALTH & BEAUTY

Control weight now 3758988

SLIMMING PROGRAM 5221138

Tired N Sick? Take RE-VITA LIQUAHEALTH 09178479179

PETS

DOG TRAINER 0919-3419012

Dog Trainer 0919-2050952

G Ret Pups 09185221929

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8:00 - 10:00 PM

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7220433 • 4123543

PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF LOSS

DFNN (Diversified Financial Network Inc.) StockCert 0000170, 0000171, 0000172 (259,259 shares each) issued to EVOSERVE, INC. If no contest received new cert. will be issued. (PDI-Aug. 11, 18 & 25, 2004)

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

ATTN:CEBU CITY RESIDENTS Extra Income 09162-2189482

•Trvl N Work Fr Home•
carnextranow.com code:atb2004
8531008 09178901851 Arlene

EARN P10T up/week - HOW? share d bisnez 0921-5914739

EARN PARTTIME 09169368917

Extraincome upto P10k/mo7423327

I MAKE P500,000.00/mo
I Need 45 Women to Train with Serious work experience
Call Ms.Tan 8175678 8401182

LAD-D SCNN & DSTRN Annex "D"
CARP Form No. 5 (4)
Revised 2003

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRARIAN REFORM
Region 10
PROVINCE OF BUKIDNON
City Agrarian Reform Office
Malaybalay City

NOTICE OF COVERAGE

Pursuant to section 7 of R.A. No. 6657, otherwise known as the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform law of 1988, the Republic of the Philippines, thru the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), hereby subjects under the coverage of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program your landholding with the following description

Name of Landowners	Title #	TD #
Adoracion Mendoza	T-7398	059-13-012-18-013
Adoracion Mendoza	T-498	059-13-012-18-011
Angelita Mendoza	P-1915	059-13-012-18-016
Bartolome Mendoza	P-1916	059-13-012-14-001
Adoracion Mendoza	P-1917	059-13-012-18-014
Adoracion Mendoza	P-1918	059-13-012-18-007

Registry of Deeds of Bukidnon
Approximate total area — 120 hectares more or less
Location — Aglayan, Malaybalay City

In this connection, we invite you to a field investigation and/or public hearing which we shall conduct on September 16, 2004 at Aglayan, Malaybalay City

Whenever applicable, you have the right or privilege to:

1. Apply for an exemption clearance or for exclusion from CARP coverage;
2. Retain an area not exceeding five (5) hectares pursuant to Section 6 of RA 6657,
3. Nominate your children who may qualify as beneficiaries to the subject landholding, and/or
4. Submit evidence for determining just compensation of the subject landholding.

To exercise any of the above landowner rights/privileges, the necessary application or petition should be filed before the Government incurs any expense necessary for acquisition and distribution of the subject landholding, not later than 60 calendar days from receipt of this Notice of coverage. Any late legal action that may be taken beyond the said 60-day period resulting in the nullification of this CARP proceeding, shall hold you liable for the reimbursement of all expenses that the Government has spent for acquisition and distribution of the subject landholding.

Failure to file the proper application for retention within 60 days from receipt of this Notice of Coverage is deemed a waiver of the right to retention under Section 6 RA 6657, in accordance with the applicable rules and regulations of the DAR. Within 30 from filing of the application, you shall submit to the Municipal Agrarian Reform Officer (MARO) a sketch map of the area you wish to retain, failure to do so within said 30-day period constitutes an authorization for the MARO to choose the retention area in your behalf. The DAR may disapprove your choice of retention area if not compact and contiguous.

The privilege to nominate your children who may qualify as beneficiaries is waived if you fail to submit to the MARO, within 60 days from receipt of this Notice of Coverage, the proper application with the complete names of your nominees, their addresses, birth dates, and other relevant information in accordance with the applicable rules and regulations of the DAR.

The right to question the valuation of your landholding is waived if you fail to submit to the MARO, within 60 days from receipt of the Notice of Coverage, a Statement of Production and Net Income (Annex "A" of A.O. No. 1, Series of 2003) and other evidence necessary for determining just compensation under Section 17 of RA 6657, in accordance with the applicable rules and regulations of the DAR.

Pursuant to Executive Order No. 405 dated 14 June 1990, the DAR shall request the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) to determine the land value of the subject landholding. You will receive an update as soon as the DAR receives the LBP's Memorandum of Valuation.

(Sgd.) ALEXANDRA T. BAHIAN
City Agrarian Reform Officer

(PDI Aug. 11, 18 & 25, 2004)

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

In the Business World, everyone is paid in 2 coins: Cash & experience. Take the experience 1st; the cash will come later. Do u want to know how? Text 0919-8967737

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Need Xtra Income P/F Time 7126374

RTW Consign 09167940002

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Beautician Proj.3 T436-8305

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JOB HIRING 09196913491 IRA

PACIFIC: MAIDS, ETC SINCE 1946 T:7312672

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More Classifieds on page B6

INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION

urgently needs:

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- ☐ EXCELLENT DESKTOP PUBLISHING SKILLS
- ☐ EXCELLENT COMMUNICATION SKILLS BOTH WRITTEN AND VERBAL
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- ☐ DETAIL-ORIENTED AND ORGANIZED

"WEB DEVELOPER/PROGRAMMER"

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- ☐ ABILITY TO LEARN QUICKLY & ADAPT WORK IN A SMALL-TEAM DEV'T ENVIRONMENT
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INTERESTED APPLICANTS CAN SEND RESUMÉ TO:
terence@nxpro.net
CONTACT : MR. BEN PINEDA
#0927-3170589 & 049-5412473
MR. JAMES CUETO
#0919-8710066 / 0918-3254273

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Mr. Norvin Ignacio Alarcon / a.k.a. Norly Alarcon is no longer connected with the Unification Theological Seminary, Family Federation for World Peace and Tong-il Moo Do Phil., Inc. effective July 15, 2004. Any transactions entered into after the said date are unauthorized and will not be honored.

(PDI--Aug. 18, 2004)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT
NATIONAL CAPITAL JUDICIAL REGION
BRANCH 115, PASAY CITY

In the Matter of the Petition For Correction of Entry on the Birth Certificate of Minor Child CURTIS LEE BURGOS,

SP. PROC. NO. 04-0054 CFM

BERNADETTE J. BURGOS
Respondent.
x- -x

ORDER

Before this Court is a petition filed by petitioner Bernadette J. Burgos, thru counsel, praying that after due proceedings, publication and hearing, a judgment be rendered granting the petition –

1. Ordering the cancellation of the entries on the certificate of live birth of minor child CURTIS LEE BURGOS, with Registry No. 2004-968 recorded with Office of the Civil Registrar of Pasay City, particularly the information written on the portion indicating the father of the said child,
2. Ordering the cancellation of the entries found at the dorsal side of the certificate of live birth, with Registry No. 2004-968, showing the "Affidavit of Acknowledgment/ Admission of Paternity"
3. Other reliefs and remedies deemed equitable and just are also prayed for.

Finding the petition to be sufficient in form and subtance, notice is hereby given that the above entitled petition is set for hearing before this Court on August 25, 2004 at 8:30 A.M., at which place, date and time all interested persons may appear and show cause why the petition should not be granted.

Let this Order be published once a week for three (3) consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines.

Furnish a copy of this Order to the Office of the Solicitor General, the Civil Register of Pasay City and the National Census and Statistics Office.

SO ORDERED.

Pasay City, Metro Manila, July 19, 2004

(Original Signed) FRANCISCO G. MENDIOLA
Judge

(PDI--Aug. 11, 18 & 25, 2004)

Republic of the Philippines
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT OF NEGROS ORIENTAL
7th Judicial Region
BRANCH 37
Dumaguete City

IN RE: PETITION FOR THE DECLARATION OF PRESUMPTIVE DEATH OF RONALDO BUTAL PURSUANT TO PARAGRAPH 2 OF ARTICLE 41 OF THE FAMILY CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES,

SP. PROC. NO. 4164

SUSANA SANTILLAN,
Petitioner.
x-----------------------------x

ORDER

Petitioner Susana Santillan, through her counsel Atty. Rodrigo V. Icao, filed a petition for the Declaration of Presumptive Death of Ronaldo Butal.

Notice is hereby given that the above-entitled petition is set for initial hearing on August 30, 2004 at 8:30 o'clock in the morning at the Session Hall of RTC-Branch 37, Dumaguete City. All interested persons may appear on said date, time and place, and show cause, if they have any, why the petition should not be granted.

Let this Order be published once a week for two (2) consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines.

Furnish the Office of the Solicitor General and the petitioner with a copy of this Order.

SO ORDERED.

Given this 2nd day of July 2004, in the city of Dumaguete, Philippines.

(Sgd.) JENNY LIND R. ALDECOA-DELORINO
Presiding Judge

(PDI--Aug. 11 & 18, 2004)

Republic of the Philippines
Supreme Court
Manila

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

The Government of the Philippines has received a loan from the World Bank towards the cost of the Judicial Reform Support Project (JRSP) and intends to apply a portion of the loan to eligible payments under this Contract.

One of the initiatives identified in the reform program is the Judicial Reform Support Project (JRSP), which is being financed by the World Bank (WB). This particular initiative seeks to 1) improve case adjudication and access to justice; 2) enhance the integrity infrastructure of the Court; and 3) strengthen the capacity of the Supreme Court to manage the Judiciary. The project will be implemented for a six (6) year period, with loan effectiveness date commencing in December 2003 and closing in December 2009. To ensure the effective and efficient realization of the JRSP, and consistent with the Judicial Reform objectives, the Supreme Court through the Program Management Office (PMO) intends to engage the services of a Change Management consultant firm.

The Supreme Court of the Philippines now invites consultancy firms as Change Management Specialist.

Interested consultancy firms must have a minimum of ten (10) years experience in the development, design, implementation and management of change management programs in the public / private sector, with a minimum of three (3) projects implemented in the last five (5) years. Experience on similar projects within the Asia/Pacific Region and specifically in the Philippines would be an advantage.

The Firm should display a sensitivity to, and cultural understanding of the environment into which the reforms are being introduced. Strong communication skills supported by a strong ethical basis are essential in a project of this sensitivity.

Interested firms are required to submit not later than 2:00 P.M. on or before the 14th day following the date of the first publication on 11 August 2004 one (1) original and nine (9) copies of their Letter of Intent and Company Profile to Justice Presbitero J. Velasco, jr., Court Administrator and Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee for the JRSP, c/o Engr. Nestor U. Venturillo, Head, BAC-JRSP Secretariat, 6th Floor, Centennial Building, Padre Faura St., Ermita, Manila.

The Consultant Firm will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the World Bank's Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers, January 1997 (revised September 1997, January 1999 and May 2002).

The Supreme Court reserves the right to reject any or all bids or offers, waive any defects or informality therein and accept the offer which it deems most advantageous to the Court.

11 August, 2004.

(Sgd.) JUSTICE PRESBITERO J. VELASCO, JR.
Court Administrator and
Chairman JRSP-Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI--Aug. 11 & 18, 2004)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
Center for Health Development - Eastern Visayas
EASTERN VISAYAS REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER
Tacloban City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Department of Health (DOH) through Eastern Visayas Regional Medical Center (EVRMC), Hospital Bids & Awards Committee (HBAC), Tacloban City, Leyte, hereby invites sealed bids for INFRA PROJECTS AND EQUIPMENT for the hospital.

Bid documents can be secured by qualified participants from the Hospital Bids and Awards Committee (HBAC) through the Secretariat upon payment of a non-refundable fee of One Thousand Pesos (Php 1,000.00) for INFRA PROJECTS and Five Hundreds Pesos (Php 500.00) for EQUIPMENT.

Pre-Bid Conference, dropping and opening of bids will be held at the Chief of Hospital Conference Room, EVRMC, Tacloban City, following this schedule:

Eligibility Checking (for Infra bidders)	August 25, 2004, 9:00 AM
Pre-Bid Conference	August 26, 2004 9:00 AM
Submission and receipt of bids	September 8, 2004, not later than 9:00 AM (for Infra) September 9, 2004, not later than 9:00 AM (for equipment)

A Bidder's Bond in the form of Cash or Manager's Check in an amount equivalent to one percent (1%) of the approved budget for the contract must accompany each bid.

1. Hospital Equipment		P6,230,630.00
2. Infra Projects		P1,909,261.95
a. Repair of ICU	P1,000,000.00	
b. Repair of NICU	80,000.00	
c. Repair of Doctor's Quarters	215,503.95	
d. Repair of Admin. Roofing	613,758.00	

For particulars, please see Dr. Flora A. de la Peña, Chair or its Secretariat, HBAC, with Tel. Nos. (053) 321-3136, 321-9874 & 321-3129, EVRMC, Tacloban City or email add: evrmc@mozcom.com

(Sgd.) FLORA A. DE LA PEÑA, MD., FPSP
Chair, Hospital Bids and Awards Committee

NOTED:
(Sgd.) ADELAIDA AMARGA-ASPERIN, MD., MHA
Chief of Hospital III

(PDI--Aug. 11 & 18, 2004)

PORO POINT MANAGEMENT CORPORATION
A Subsidiary of Bases Conversion Development Authority

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

CONSTRUCTION OF THE PPMC ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING

The Poro Point Management Corporation (PPMC) invites interested contractors, with a license of at least Medium A (GB-1 Building and Industrial Plant) as accredited by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB), to submit Application for Eligibility, and subsequently to bid, if eligible, for the Construction of PPMC Administrative Building Poro Point Special Economic and Freeport Zone, Poro, San Fernando City, La Union.

The Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) of P 8,000,000.00 shall come from PPMC corporate funds.

Eligibility Forms shall be made available to interested contractors on the date and place mentioned below upon payment of a non-refundable amount of two thousand five hundred pesos (P 2,500.00).

Schedule of Procurement Activities:

Activity	Dates	Time	Place
Issuance of Eligibility Statement Form	September 2, 2004	8am to 5pm	PPMC Office, Pennsylvania Ave., San Fernando City, La Union
Deadline for Submission of Letter of Intent and Eligibility Statement Form	September 9, 2004	12:00 noon	PPMC Office, Pennsylvania Ave., San Fernando City, La Union
Issuance of Instruction to Bidders and other Bid Documents	October 1, 2004	8am to 5pm	PPMC Office, Pennsylvania Ave., San Fernando City, La Union
Pre Bid Conference and Site Inspection	October 4, 2004	2:00 pm	Pre-Departure Area, Terminal Building, San Fernando Airport, Canaoay, San Fernando City, La Union
Submission and Opening of Bids	October 18, 2004	9:00 am	Pre-Departure Area, Terminal Building, San Fernando Airport, Canaoay, San Fernando City, La Union

Application for Eligibility shall be evaluated using "PASS/FAIL" criteria. Thus, only eligible firms shall be invited to participate in the bidding. All Bids shall be evaluated in accordance with RA 9184 and its IRR-A.

Should you need any further information or clarification regarding the Project, you may contact Engr. Jose B. Karganilla at Telephone No. (072) 888-59-54.

(Sgd.) ANTHONY C. MANGUIAT
Chairman, BAC

(PDI--Aug. 18 & 25, 2004)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM
East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City

Visit the SSS website for Bid Invitations

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY & TO BID TELLERING SYSTEM (2ND PHASE)

The **SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM** is inviting the following suppliers to apply for eligibility & to bid for the implementation of the 2nd phase of tellering system for various SSS Branch Offices:

Requirement	Approved Budget for the Contract	Minimum Requirements	Source of Fund	Contract Duration
Teller's Booth & other accessories	P 4,890,900.00	3-year experience in the manufacture & supply of System Furniture, Office Chairs; with plant facilities	CAPEX – Furniture	45 calendar days
Cash Safe	P 1,150,000.00	10-year supplier of High Quality Standards/ Underwriter's Laboratories Inc. (UL) listed Fire Proof Cash Safe	CAPEX – Equipment	45 calendar days
Money/Bill Counter	P 920,000.00	5-year supplier of High Quality Standard Bill Counting Machines	CAPEX – Equipment	21 calendar days

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES:

Particulars	Date	Venue
Issuance of eligibility requirements	August 18-Sept. 02, 2004	BAC Secretariat, 6th Flr., SSS Main Bldg.
Deadline of submission of eligibility requirements	September 08, 2004	BAC Secretariat, 6th Flr., SSS Main Bldg.
Issuance of Bidding Documents to Eligible Bidders upon payment of a non-refundable fee as follows: • Teller 's Booth – P1,000.00 • Cash Safe – P500.00 • Money Counter – P500.00	September 13, 2004	BAC Secretariat, 6th Flr., SSS Main Bldg.
Pre-bid Conference	Sept. 17, 2004 – 2:00 p.m.	Bidding Room, 6th Flr., SSS Main Bldg.
Submission & Opening of Bids shall be announced and confirmed through a Bid Bulletin.		

For any inquiry, please call telephone numbers 922-2991 or 920-6401 local 5490/5491.

This bidding shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act."

The SSS reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any formality or technicality, and to award to any bidder whose proposal is deemed most advantageous to the SSS. The SSS neither assumes any obligation for any loss whatsoever that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of their respective bids, nor does the SSS guarantee that an award will be made.

THE CHAIRMAN
BIDS & AWARDS COMMITTEE

(PDI – August 18, 2004)

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Date : August 9, 2004
Contract No.: BCMD, 2004-008

1. Contract Name : Design, Supply, and Integration with existing Telecom Facilities, of Microwave Radio System for Mindanao Grid
2. The contract to be performed by the successful bidder shall consist of design, supply, delivery to sites, integration with existing telecom facilities, testing, and commissioning of microwave radio system for 10 links at Mindanao Grid.
3. The Approved Budget for the Contract to be bid from the Internal Cash Generation of TransCo is P26,300,000.00.
4. Application for Eligibility is open to Filipino and Foreign manufacturers, suppliers/dealers, distributors who have the legal, technical and financial requisites of the contract to be bid.
5. Foreign bidders who wish to participate in the procurement of goods must prove that their respective countries of origin grant reciprocal rights to Filipino citizens with respect to procurement of goods by its government, in compliance with R.A. No. 5183.
6. Application for Eligibility shall be evaluated using "PASS/FAIL" criteria and only Eligible Bidders shall be included by TransCo in the bidding. All bids equal to or lower than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be evaluated based on the responsiveness of the supplier's offer to the contract under bidding subject to Post qualification before an award is made. Bid Prices submitted higher than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be rejected and returned outright.
7. Eligibility & Bid Documents will be available for issuance on **August 11, 2004 at the Bids and Contract Management Department**, Ground Floor, Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City 1104, Telefax No. 921-23-08 upon presentation of letter of intent and a payment of non-refundable fee of P5,000.00.
8. Deadline for submission of duly accomplished Application for Eligibility Forms, statements and Bid Proposals (Technical and Price) shall be on **September 22, 2004**, **1:30 P.M.** at the De La Paz Function Room, Training Center, Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road TransCo, Diliman, Quezon City, Metro Manila.

   If the date is a non-working day or declared non-working holiday, the deadline for submission shall be moved to the next working day immediately following said date. Late submission shall not be accepted.

   Site inspection is scheduled on **August 23-27, 2004**. Kindly coordinate with TransCo personnel regarding the details. Pre-Bid Conference shall be held on **September 3, 2004** at the same venue stated in Item No. 8.
9. Manufacturers, suppliers/dealers, distributors not yet included in the TransCo's List of registered Suppliers/Contractors, who wish to participate in the public bidding, in order to facilitate eligibility checks/screening, are requested to register with the registration office mentioned above by submitting the following basic requirements, duly notarized, which should be maintained current and updated at least once a year. A certificate of Registration will be issued to suppliers/contractors upon approval.
   - Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) business name registration or Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) registration certificate, as appropriate;
   - Mayor's permit and/or municipal license for the current year;
   - Copy of Taxpayer's Identification Number (TIN) issued by BIR or Copy of BIR registration showing TIN.
   - Notarized statement of the prospective bidder that it is not "blacklisted" or barred from bidding by any government agency, office or corporation;
   - Audited financial statements, stamped "received" by the BIR or its duly accredited and authorized institutions, for the immediately preceding calendar year, showing, among others, the prospective bidder's total and current assets and liabilities inclusive of Income Tax Return and Receipt;

   For foreign bidders, the required documents applicable to entities doing business in the Philippines shall be substituted by the appropriate equivalent documents issued by foreign bidder's country, which documents shall be duly acknowledged and/or authenticated by the Philippine Consulate thereat.

   Note : Prospective bidders are allowed to submit the above requirements together with their Eligibility Forms and Documents during the deadline for the submission of Eligibility requirements and Bid proposals (Technical and Price)
10. TransCo reserves the right to reject any application for Eligibility or all bids without offering any reason, waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.
11. The Contract to be bid shall be governed by the Provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.
12. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) DOMINADOR S. GEONZON
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI–August 11 & 18, 2004)

OBITUARIES

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❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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Forever in our Hearts

Dr. Angel Resano Feliciano, Sr.

On Friday, August 13, 2004 at 8:10 in the morning, "Dr. Sr." joined our dear Lord at the age of 84 years. As owner & director of Faith Hospital, he was a dedicated physician-surgeon. He will be dearly missed and lovingly remembered by sons: **Dr. Angel Jr.** and **Dr. Pito**; daughters-in-law **Nilda** and **Aster**; grandchildren, brother and sisters, nieces, nephews, relatives and numerous friends.

Visitation is at his home at the Faith Hospital Compound, Aguada St., Ozamiz City, Mis. Occ.

Funeral Mass will be offered on Saturday, August 21, 2004, 1:00 p.m. at the Immaculate Conception Parish Cathedral. Interment will follow at the Roman Catholic Cemetery.

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Day before publication

ANTONIO RO. HERRERA, SR.

March 3, 1927 – August 16, 2004

Chairman of the Board, Electrobus Consolidated, Inc.
Former General Manager, Columbia Wire & Cable
Former Chairman, Board of Mechanical Engineering
Professional Regulation Commission

Peacefully joined his Creator
on August 16, 2004 at the age of 77.

His loving wife **ROSE**; his children and in-laws **JUN & BETH, GRACE & REY, ALICE** and his grandchildren request for prayers for his eternal happiness.

His remains lie at the Felicidad Chapel,
Arlington Memorial Chapels,
Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Cremation will be on Sunday, August 22, 2004
at the Eternal Gardens Memorial Park,
Baesa, Kalookan City.

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

ATTY. JOVENCIO N. FOJAS

February 24, 1921 – July 2, 2004

wish to thank all who have condoled us in our bereavement. Your sympathy and Mass cards, flower offerings, and most especially your kind words of consolation have greatly eased our pain at the loss of our loved one.

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

JOSE "Pepe" Nuñez Vergel de Dios

who passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on July 10, 2004.

wish to express our heartfelt gratitude and sincerest appreciation to all those who were with us in our time of sorrow, for the beautiful flowers, mass offerings, messages of sympathy, for attending the masses and the funeral rites and for everything else that you have done to share with us our grief on the loss of our dearly beloved Daddy/Lolo Pepe.

So Dearly Missed and Lovingly Remembered

by Wife, Children and Grandchildren on the
1ST DEATH ANNIVERSARY
of our Beloved

JOSE "CHICHONG" TORRES CONEJERO

Who joined his Creator on August 18, 2003

Masses to be offered on August 18, 2004:

Cebu Masses	6:00 AM	**Asilo de la Milagrosa Church**, Lahug
	8:30 AM	**Sto. Rosario Parish**
	10:00 AM	**Redemptorist Church**, Capitol Site
	6:00 PM	**St. Therese of Child Jesus Pasteur** – Lahug
Manila Masses	7:00 AM	**Mary the Queen Church** – Greenhills, San Juan
	6:30 PM	**Parish Church of The Resurrection** – Phase I, BF Homes, Parañaque
U.S.A.	7:30 AM	**Our Lady of Guadalupe** – Las Vegas, Nevada
	10:00 AM	**St. Leonard Church** – Freemont, California (Offered August 17, 2004)

WIFE – TERESITA "Pochay" H. CONEJERO

CHILDREN
Dodi-Beth Conejero
Teng Conejero
Ela-Ver Reyes
Edu Conejero
Dindo-Cindy Conejero
Cheche Conejero

BROTHERS
Mario Conejero (†)
Antonio Conejero (†)
Freddie Conejero

SISTERS
Rosita Conejero Najar
Cristina Conejero Cordoba

IN-LAWS
Nena & Jose Maria Galdiano
Nongoy & Marlene Hernaez

NEPHEWS & NIECES
Edwin & Stella Chua
Vangie Agting
Rafi & Carmen Recto

GRANDCHILDREN
Nica and **Nico**
Bianca, Beatrice and **Bernice**
Andrew and **Nicole**

Inaki and **Iñigo**

IN-LAWS

Chelo Conejero

George Najar
Boy Cordoba (†)

We request all the relatives, friends and the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose and peace of his soul.

Mariano C. Fabi

Public Schools District Supervisor
Pagudpud District
of
Bangui, Ilocos Norte

Died in the Grace of our Lord
on August 8, 2004 at the age of 64.

His bereaved wife **Ester**; children **Joy** and **Abet**, **Hazel** and **Clemente**, **Adonis** and **Juvy**, and **Christine**; grandchildren: **Aela Jan**, **Joshua**, **Lyndon**, **Chelsea**, **Lucky**, **Jem-jem** and **Camille**; brothers and sisters; other relatives and friends request the pious readers to join them in praying for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the family residence in Bangui I.N.

Mass will be at the St. Lawrence Parish Church, Bangui I.N. at 8:30 a.m. on Thursday, August 19, 2004.

Interment will follow at the Bangui Cemetery, Bangui, Ilocos Norte.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave us His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have Everlasting life." — John 3:16

"In Peace I shall both lie down and sleep,
for you alone, Lord make me secure..." **Psalm 4:9**

Our Dearly Beloved

ENGR. JOVENAL Z. GONZALEZ, SR. (PME, AEE)

Peacefully joined the Lord on August 17, 2004 at the age of 74.

His bereaved wife **Liling**; children **Jet & Delia, Jovy & Marie, Bambi & Bobot, Jorge & Bhelle**; sisters **Luz & Aurora**; brothers **Nick** and **Gabriel**; grandchildren **ML, Jay-Jay, Ava, Via, Jeje, Jonah & Raymond**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City.

Cremation will be on Saturday, August 21, 2004 at Loyola Crematorium after the 10:00 a.m. Mass.

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord." Matthew 10:39

What should you ask before buying a franchise?

WORKING WOUNDED

Bob Rosner

DEAR WW: My husband wants to buy a franchise. He wants to work for himself and he thinks a franchise will be easy, like paint by numbers business. Isn't he understating the challenge?

Not Kid Stuff

A few years ago, I stayed at a hotel in Cincinnati. At first, everything seemed normal—the usual run of businessmen and women came and went. But the second day, I noticed something odd: the men seemed bigger than they'd been the day before, the women taller and more striking. And, in fact, the next morning everything was back to normal. Just to be sure, I asked at the reception desk. No, I hadn't been dreaming: the Seattle Seahawks and a convention of fashion models had checked into—and out of—the hotel.

Well, running a franchise is a little like running that hotel. For a short time everything looks big and beautiful and shiny. But then, the glamour guests go home and you're left with floors to scrub, employees to manage, customers to woo, vendors to argue with and books to balance.

Running a franchise isn't kid stuff. The tips below will help you think clearly about the challenge. For more, check out "220 Best Franchises" (Broadway, 2000).

Is the business a solid fit? To run your franchise, you're going to work longer and harder than you've ever worked before. So make sure you pick one that is a match for your interests, abilities, weak points, personal and financial goals. There are literally thousands of franchise options, so take the time to find the perfect match.

Will customers love your product or service as much as you do? You wouldn't be looking at a franchise if you didn't believe in the product or service. But do others feel the same way? Get out and talk to potential customers to see if they're ready to show you their money.

Will the franchiser provide adequate support? Franchise brochures make franchising sound like the Sharks and Jets: you're never alone, never disconnected, well protected. At some franchises that's true. But at others, the company can't pick their franchisees out of a police line-up once they've signed the papers. Go talk to other franchisees (not just the ones they suggest). Find out how much support, training and expertise they'll really make available.

Do you have franchise experts? I've got as many lawyer and accountant jokes as the next person, but a good lawyer and accountant are worth their weight in gold when buying a franchise. (Just don't tell them that or they may charge you accordingly.)

Are you getting the best terms? The terms they initially offer (fees, expenses, financing) are probably not the best they have to offer. Research different franchises to see how the contracts vary. Then, negotiate hard with your franchiser to get the best deal you can.

Franchising isn't kid stuff—but if you go in with your eyes open, your business can grow as big and beautiful as your dream.

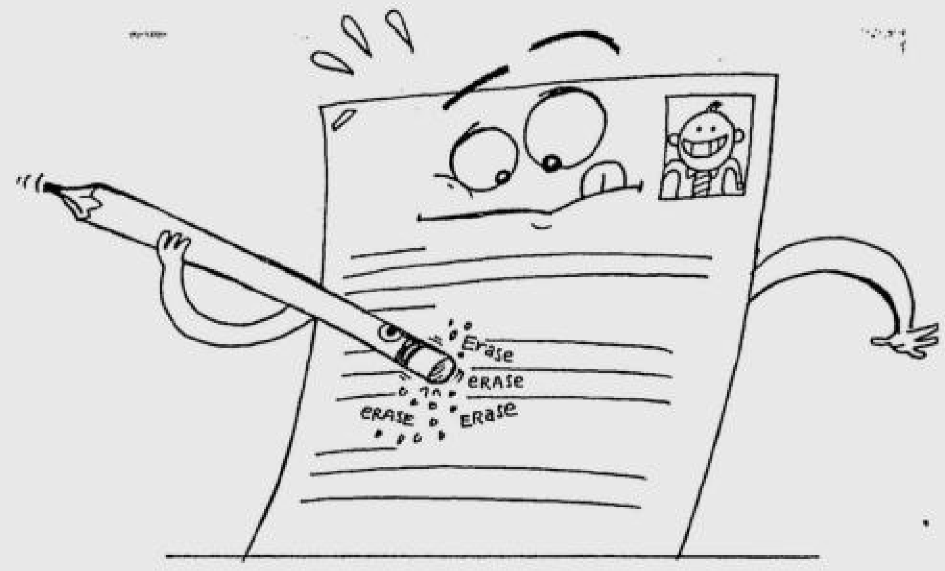
Here are the results from a recent workingwounded.com/ABCnews.com online ballot: What attitude should you have toward your franchiser?

—Enemy, 15.1 percent
—Family, 31.3 percent
—Acquaintance, 53.4 percent

(Mr. Rosner is based in Seattle, Washington, USA. E-mail him at bob@workingwounded.com.)

DIONISIO BUCCAT

ILLUSTRATION BY DIONISIO BUCCAT



Resumé writing tips

By Candy G. Villanueva

(This is the continuation of the article published last August 4 in this section.)

MOST people think the curriculum vitae or CV and the resumé are one and the same. The CV is different from the regular resume. It is longer, more in depth and is usually more than two pages. Applicants for graduate schools and professional programs commonly use the CV. Professionals who have impressive credentials and are applying for a position in international firms or those who seek promotions also use it.

Aside from the basic headings, the CV includes professional and career objectives. It also includes a Summary of Qualifications, a list of Trainings and Seminars attended and Professional Licenses or Certifications. The web site www.provenresumes.com also suggests the following headings to be included: Educational or Professional Honors or Awards; Scientific or Academic Research, Laboratory Experience and Related Skills; Description of Thesis or Dissertation, Papers Written, Publications; Related Extra-Curricular Activities, Professional and Association Memberships; Community Involvement; Travel/Exposure to Cultural Experiences and Foreign Language Skills. Any information that may support career objectives and qualifications should be included.

Cover letter

As in every book, a resumé must have an introductory page in the form of the cover letter. The cover letter immediately tells your prospective employer the position you're eyeing and your general qualification. Make sure you know whom you're addressing. "To whom it may concern" or "Dear Sir/Ma'am" appears weak and indirect. Call the company and ask for the name and position of the appropriate person you should send your letter to.

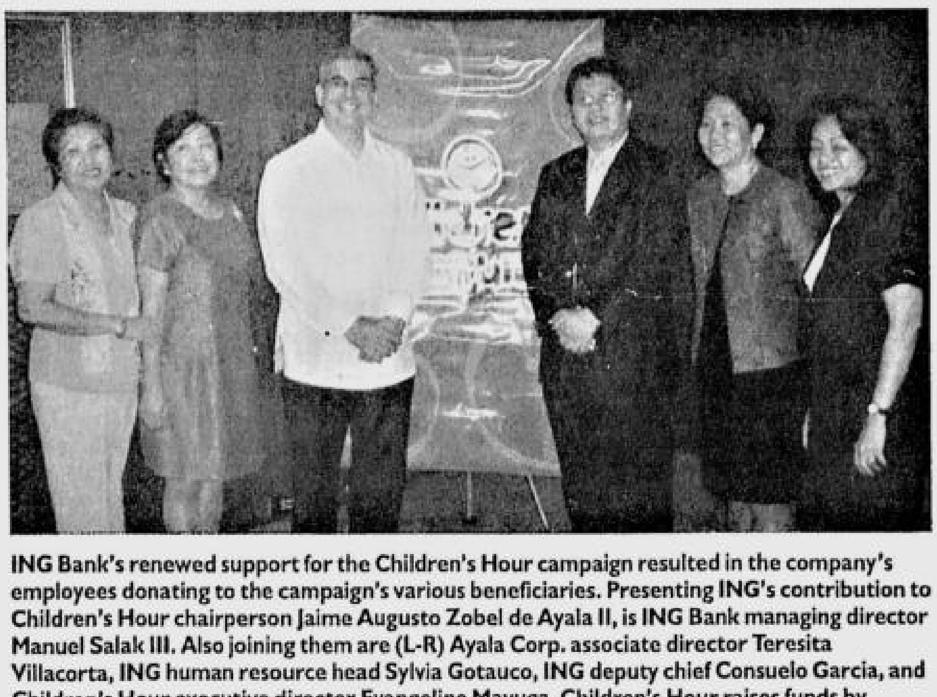
Although a cover letter should be brief and to the point, it must include your qualifications, the position you are applying for and a statement of your knowledge and enthusiasm for the company. "It would be a privilege to be a part of a prestigious company like ..." would give an extra punch to your letter. Don't elaborate on your skills and experiences. Leave that to the meat of your resume. Take an extra step of confidence by expressing how you would be perfect for the job. Ask directly for an interview by suggesting that you are available anytime at their convenience.

If you wish to apply for a position that is non-existent or unavailable, you may write a speculative or proposal letter. In this letter, propose the position to the company and explain its benefits. Tell them why you are qualified for the proposed position and why you want to undertake this endeavor.

Honesty

The golden rule in resumé writing: never lie. Your credentials can easily be checked. Specialist recruiters know the business of your field so refrain from exaggeration or embellishments.

Make sure the gaps in your resumés are covered. Idle time does not make a good impression. So if you have a year or two unaccounted for, be sure that you will be able to explain this. Job-hopping doesn't look too appealing either. Do not include companies you've been with for only a few weeks or months. All in all, it's the substance and depth of the content. Don't make up for lack of substance by length. It's tricky. You must be able to simplify without appearing too lazy. But the most important thing is to be honest. One little fib may cost you your career.



ING Bank's renewed support for the Children's Hour campaign resulted in the company's employees donating to the campaign's various beneficiaries. Presenting ING's contribution to Children's Hour chairperson Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II, is ING Bank managing director Manuel Salak III. Also joining them are (L-R) Ayala Corp. associate director Teresita Villacorta, ING human resource head Sylvia Gotauco, ING deputy chief Consuelo Garcia, and Children's Hour executive director Evangeline Mayuga. Children's Hour raises funds by calling on companies and individuals to devote one hour of their earnings to programs for disadvantaged Filipino children. For inquiries, visit www.childrenshour.org.ph.

Questions lead to good communication

By Doug Hissong

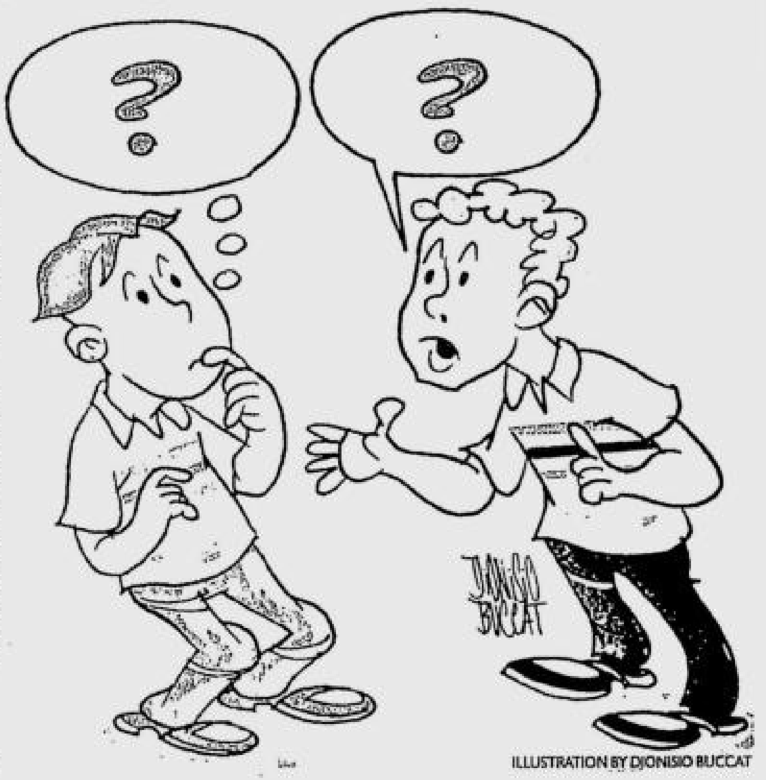


ILLUSTRATION BY DIONISIO BUCCAT

A FEW BLOCKS from where I work is a small house with a sign out front advertising fortune telling, palm reading, and card reading. One of my coworkers was curious enough to stop in. Inside he saw a sign saying "Three questions answered for $10." He asked the lady, "Isn't $10 kind of steep for three questions?"

She replied, "Yes, it is. What are your other two questions?"

Questions are important. Have you ever thought about the way you ask questions of others? It's an important aspect of your communication and building rapport with others. Questions are an important means of obtaining information and showing interest. They're the key to interacting with quiet people. There's a lot more to questions and answers than information transfer. Feelings are involved.

Pitfalls

Watch out for these pitfalls when asking questions.

1. Never ask a question unless you're prepared for, and can handle, whatever answer you get. Don't leave the person wondering,' "So why did you ask?"

2. Never ask a question and then, criticize or ridicule the answer. Ridiculing others is never wise, but it's particularly stupid after someone is kind enough to answer your question. Next time, he won't give you an answer.

3. Don't ask for advice or opinions unless you intend to seriously consider them. If your mind's made up, don't ask for input.

4. Don't ask loaded questions. That is, don't ask a question if you already know the answer or if it's obvious what answer you want to hear. Don't force someone to lie to avoid hurting your feelings or having you make a scene.

5. Don't ask about things that are none of your business. Think about why you want to ask, and if it's not a good reason don't ask. Think about what you'll do with the information if you get it. If someone asks you about something inappropriate, don't tell him more than you really want him to know or more than he really needs to know.

Open-ended questions

In talking with others, especially quiet people, it's important to ask open-ended questions, i.e., questions that require an answer of some length rather than just "yes" or "no." Examples are:

What do you enjoy most about your work on that committee?

versus

Do you enjoy working on that committee?

What is the most challenging aspect of your work?

versus

Is your work challenging?

Some people will offer more than "yes" or "no" to a closed question, but others won't and then you'll have to ask follow-up questions to learn more. The broader the question the more information it provides.

Listening

The first three pitfalls listed above remind us that asking a question should commit us to sincerely listen to the answer. Listening is the most neglected part of the communication process. We've all read about barriers to effective listening, i.e., aspects of our state of mind, the speaker, topic, or environment that make it harder to listen. When such factors are involved we need to work harder to listen well.

You've probably heard the term "active listening." It means taking positive actions to ensure that we receive the speaker's message. It may include focusing on key words and even mentally organizing or outlining the material.

Of course, in some situations you can jot a few notes to help you recall the main points. If you can't write any notes during the talk, maybe you can make a few notes shortly after the talk before you forget things.

A step beyond active listening is "interactive listening." This involves interacting with the speaker to ensure that we're receiving the message correctly. We can ask questions when the message is unclear or incomplete. We can verify that we've received the message correctly.

When listening interactively, we can make little responses, either oral or non-verbally, to show that we're listening and to encourage the person to keep talking. It also involves making periodic summary statements to which the speaker can reply to confirm our understanding of what we've heard. The summary statements may:

1. Check factual material. Examples: "So you actually submitted the report on time." "It sounds like you didn't know there was a problem."

2. Extend or generalize the material. Examples: "You evidently went to great lengths to avoid upsetting him." "You've done a number of things to improve the situation."

3. Focus on the feelings behind what was said. Examples: "You must be very proud." "That must be very frustrating for you."

Be careful not to put words in his mouth; just check your understanding of what he's saying. If he doesn't seem to buy into your summary statement, try another one or ask some questions to clarify your understanding.

Active and interactive listening require effort, but they work. Good listening skills pay off in both our professional and personal lives. Listening enables us to learn, to understand others, and to show others that we care about them.

(Reprinted with permission from hr-info.com. For more information e-mail Daniel Hissong at dhisso@ev1.net.)

'Unorthodox' ways to bond with your kids

From page B12

Sometimes you'll see a paper plane stuck here and there, and I like it because it shows that my workplace is a space that my children are comfortable in, and they understand why I have to work and why it's important to me."

Baba's advice on partying and beer drinking: Bebop's just started partying this past summer, and Baba says she can only drink one beer at a party. (Bebop even texted her to say that there was no beer, only gin pomelo, which she didn't drink either.) Bebop says she doesn't even like the taste of beer, to which Baba answers: "You may not like the taste, but someday you may get over the taste and like what it does to you."

Bex's unique parenting style: "Let's see where the journey takes us." "Nothing is taboo for me," says Bex. "I respect my kids' opinions and interests and everything is fine with me as long as it's explored within the limits of reason." So she gives her kids the freedom to explore-with the warning that with freedom comes responsibility. "In fact, freedom is responsibility. I give my children boundaries and guidelines, but I don't tell them how to run their lives. I want them to find their purpose in the world and to fulfill it."

(For more ways on how to connect with your kids even if you're not there all the time, get the latest issue of Working Mom, with Pops Fernandez on the cover. In this issue, we also give single parents the lowdown on getting too clingy with your kids. Feedback is welcome at gina_llanes@abs.pinoycentral.com.)

PEOPLE at WORK

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'Unorthodox' ways to bond with your kids

WORKING MOM

Gina Abuyuan-Llanes

WHEN we did our feature for the August issue of Working Mom, "The unorthodox mom's guide to bonding with her kids," (written by Rica Barcelon), I expected to hear some really wacky mothering methods from our subjects. Check out our line-up: high profile designer Lya Armovit, mom to Javier, 8 and Joaquin, 6; artist and art dealer Baba Balce, mom to Bebop, 14; and filmmaker and production designer Bex Padilla, mom to Sanya, 20. Lya was married in medieval blue; Baba and Bex were once married to rock and roll legends Jun Lopito and Pepe Smith, respectively. Cool, *pare*.

I was totally floored when I learned that their mothering styles exceeded even the most basic of what parenting experts tell us to do: spend 20 minutes daily with your child; really focus on them until they're seven or eight (the most critical formative years); get involved with what they do and know their friends.

Bebop, for example, never had a *yaya*. Up until she was seven, she and Baba were inseparable. The *yaya*-less years paid off—now she and her mom can talk about anything, without Bebop fearing a negative reaction from her mom. Javier and Joaquin, meanwhile, despite peer pressure, are comfortable going without a PlayStation, and having only P100 as toy budget. "You can't give them big budgets all the time because they'll come to expect it and then things get out of control," Lya says. And as she and her siblings were growing up, Sanya says that they were only allowed to have sweets on a Saturday. "They were in a little green fridge with a lock on it. We tried a lot of schemes to open the fridge, but they never worked!" No matter, she says, because that rule taught her discipline.

Excerpts

Here are excerpts from that feature:

How Lya deals with Working Mom guilt: By sometimes taking her boys with her to work. "I don't want them to view work and my workplace as something bad that takes me away from them," Lya says. "I want them to feel comfortable in my workplace so they are free to draw on the paper and use the colored pencils.

UNORTHODOX/ B11

'As an OFW, what future awaits me?'

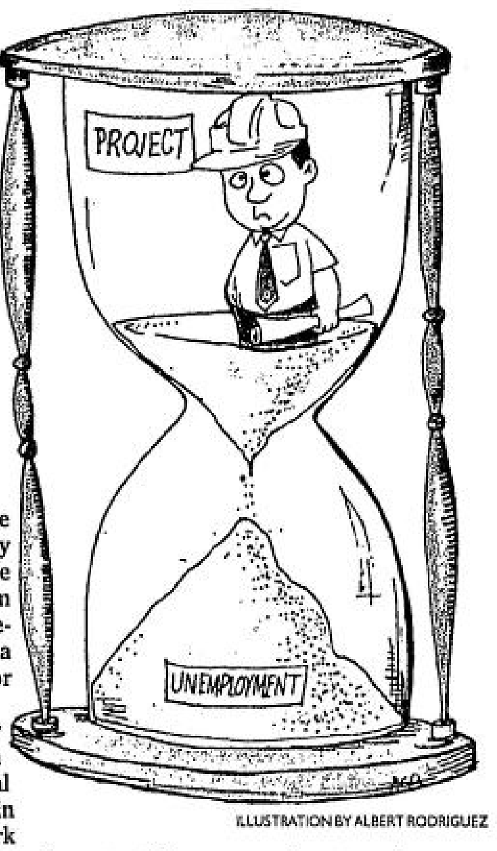

ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

By Tita Datu Puangco

Advice

FOR THE ANXIOUS PERSON AT WORK

I AM an overseas Filipino worker (OFW) working in the oil and gas construction industry. My job status is a project employee and work depends on project availability. When the project is completed and no new project will be awarded, we will once more be unemployed. It takes a year or more before we can go back to work for our company. This is a big burden for us, as a family, financially. It will affect our monthly amortizations and may also result in our children dropping out from school. As an OFW, what future awaits me?

I have completed my college degree. For two years, I tried applying for a job in our country and my last option was to go overseas. I applied for computer operator and I had worked in a human resources department. I would like to have a career change and am willing to undergo training or further schooling just to enhance my skills for further career development.

Our project will be completed soon and I'm afraid that I will be unemployed and will be back in our country in a penniless situation. It is good to stay in our country to be with my family but having no work is a big problem. I am applying online to different companies and job agencies but up to now I don't have any positive reply from them. As the days go on, I am afraid of the consequences of being a project employee or contractual.

I don't know why I am trapped in this kind of situation. I'm a career-oriented individual, professional and willing to learn and adapt to a certain task but still luck is not with me. I work hard. I am always punctual and I never engage in situations that will cause me to be reprimanded.

I hope that you can assist me in my dilemma. Thank you for taking the time to read my letter and I look forward to your kind reply.

Anxious OFW

Thank you for your letter. You are very anxious about the future because your project overseas is about to end. This feeling is understandable given the fact that you support a family. But fear and anxiety are the wrong responses to your problem. It is important that you have strong faith that you can, in fact, turn around the situation. Pray so that you will be consoled and have the light to understand the next steps you have to take.

Save for the future

When you got employed, you knew the project had a start and a beginning. What is important given your project status is to regularly save. As my mother used to say, "It is not how much you earn that matters, it is how much you save." Set aside money to build a fund that will tide you over the period of waiting for the next project. For the children's schooling, it is wise to buy pre-need educational plans for the children when you have regular cash flow.

Create your own job

Now, let us talk on the subject of employment. Why not broaden your view and set as your goal to find or create work—not simply seek employment. Gone were the days when you get employed in a company and lean on it for continuous employment. Many large companies, and more recently, even the government, have started to shed jobs. The key reasons cited: enhanced productivity, reduced costs, greater global competitiveness.

What I would advise is for you to go entrepreneurial. As demonstrated by micro enterprises that have grown in numbers these past years, you don't need much capital to start. Some begin with a budget as low as P2,000. As a consultant of ours would say, a simple business is a barbecue stand in front of your house or in a busy location. I suggest you take up a short course that will make you understand the fundamentals of business. Ancilla, my company, has over the years offered regular two-day public seminars on enterprise and business skills. As for the specific business you want to get into, make a call to the Technology and Livelihood Resource Center, a government institution doing a great job in giving skills for specific, simple homegrown businesses.

English language skills

However, if you are still keen on a desk job, my proposal is for you to train in English language skills, both oral and written skills. You can also inquire from us on this course offering. Be so proficient that you can apply to any of the call centers that are mushrooming in the country today. I know the companies are hard pressed to get quality call center agents. With the right work attitude that you cited in your letter, I am sure you will be a gift to the company that will employ you. All the best.

(Ms Puangco is CEO and chair of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting. Send feedback through e-mail to advice@ancillaedc.com.ph *or fax to* 892-2902.)

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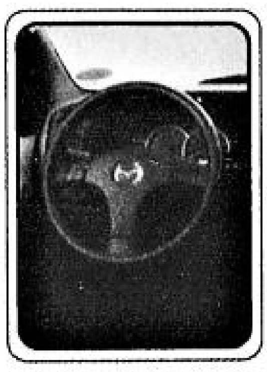
A sunroof completes your experience of the city while you're comfortably nestled within your car.



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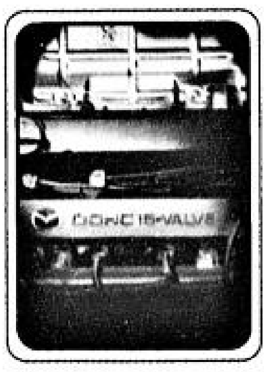

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LIFESTYLE

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Chief of Correspondents **Pam Pastor**

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Change the World Part 1

ILLUSTRATION BY ANTHONY MISTADES

Poverty. Inequality. War. Hunger. Illiteracy. Disease. Pollution.

It cannot be denied—our universe is rife with problems. And we're tired of complaining. Whining will not do us any good. It's time to do something. It's time to take things into our hands.

We are launching 2bU!'s newest column in this two-part special.

Written by correspondents and contributors, the new column portrays the ever-growing volunteer movement that has sought and strived for ways to make this society, and this world, better.

The new column seeks to harness the power of the youth toward change and betterment.

Because no one is too young to make a difference.

How about you? What are you doing to change the world?

ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT G. RODRIGUEZ

Mallrats of the world, change starts with you

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

THERE'S not a smidgen of a doubt that money can morph people into monsters or change them forever. But even if you're low on dough, you can still turn pumpkins into carriages and make a lot of Cinderellas do cartwheels out of gratitude.

The mall is one world that teems with Cinderellas, Oliver Twists and uhm, Princess Sarahs. You see them all the time that they've become nonexistent. During the few times that they feel like solid, breathing human beings, people either snap at them, or take them for granted.

Changing planet earth isn't limited to dashing to lahar-infested areas or handing out heavy bags of grocery goodies to the poor. Slipperless street children or handicapped beings aren't the only ones who need some tender loving care and tender juicy hotdogs. Everybody does.

Next time you strut your stuff in the malls, remember that just like any other time, it's an opportunity to make a little part of the map peachy and sunshiny. Even without robbing your wallet or letting out sparkling beads of perspiration, you can make a difference. Start by doing the following, while thinking of where to shop next.

MALLRATS/ C2

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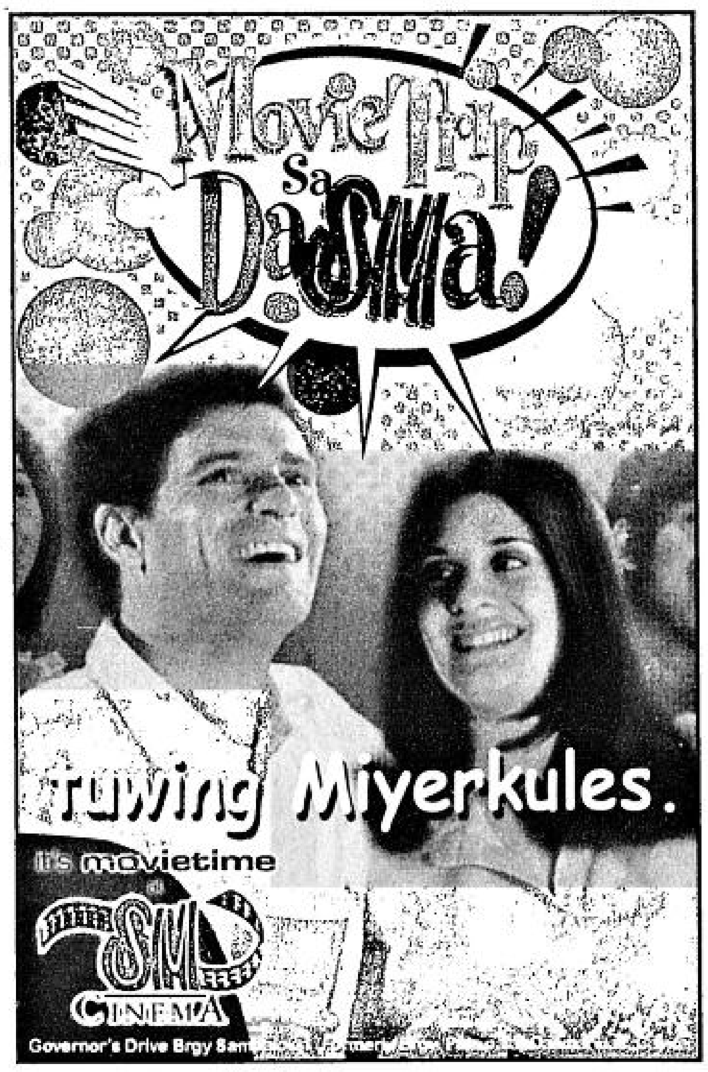

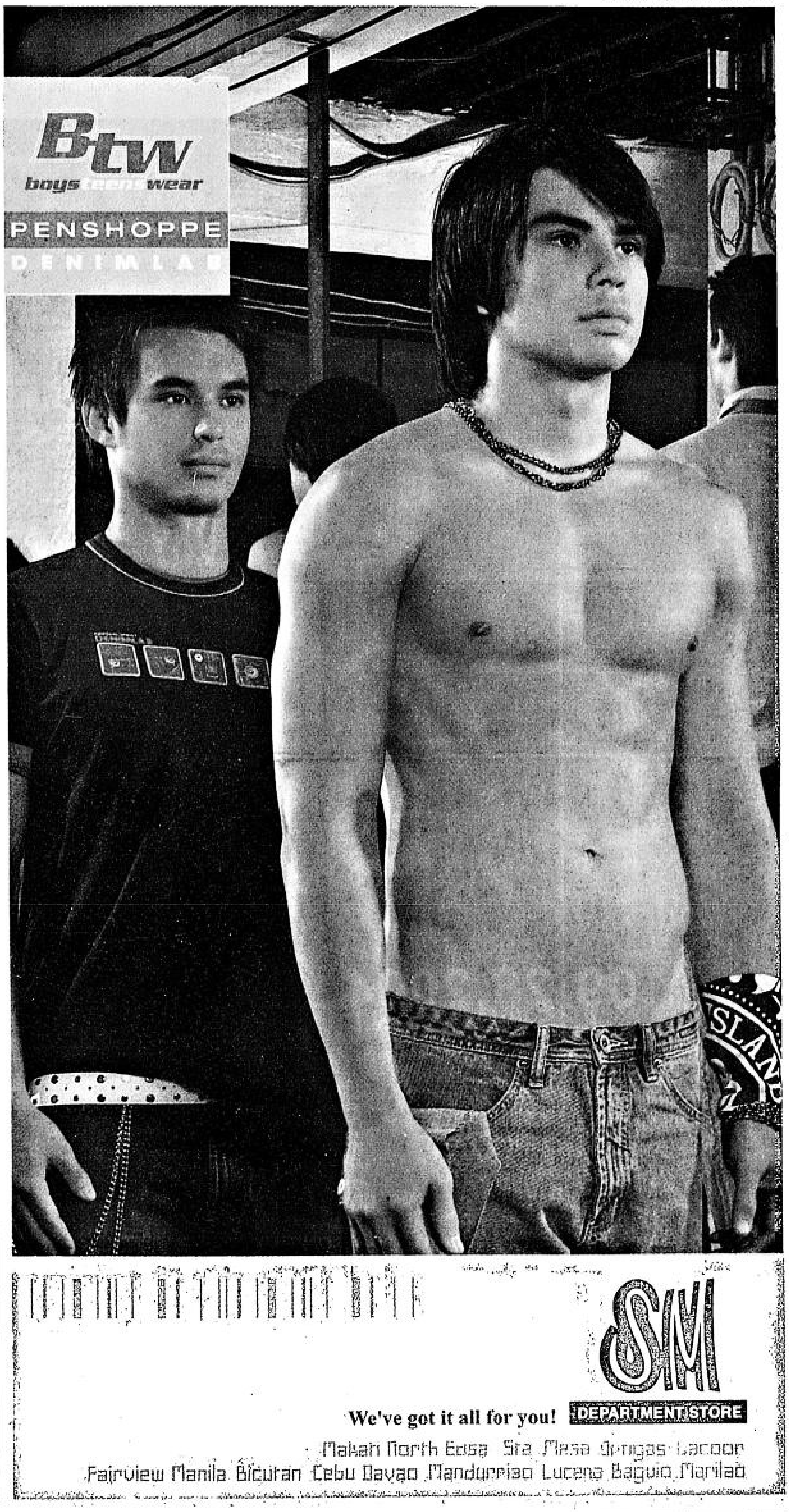

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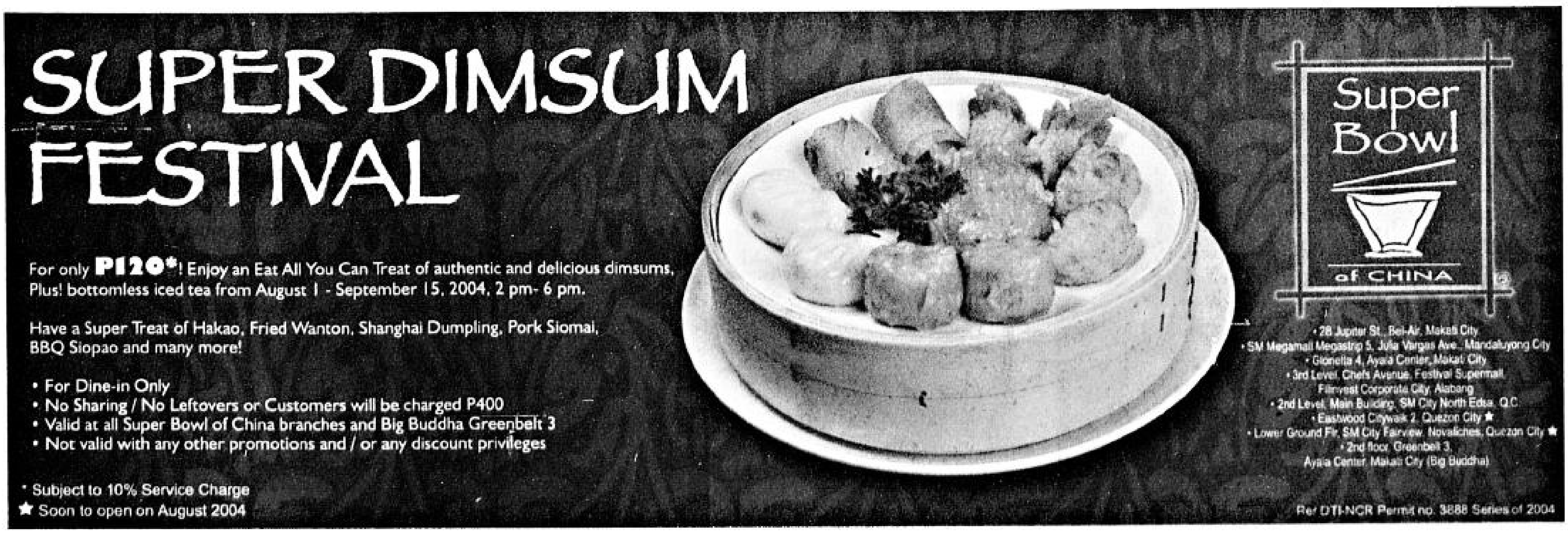
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Per DTI-NCR Permit no. 3888 Series of 2004

Mallrats of the world, change starts with you

ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT G. RODRIGUEZ

From page C1

Say welcome

It's super sad when fastfood crew members or security guards let out a radio-friendly, "Thank you for coming sir/ma'am," only to receive silence as a reply. Imagine how many times they do it—and receive nothing for their courtesy. Now I know why some of them act like zombies. It's exhaustion—due to shoppers' insensitivity. For people with demanding, tiring or boring jobs, a reply is like a shot of *kapeng barako* or Red Bull. Besides, isn't "Welcome" the instant reply to "Thank you"?

Thank

Thank security guards who open doors and make you feel like you have royal blood. Thank alert, cheerful and accommodating salesladies who get you various shoe styles while enduring the stench of your footsies. Thank crew members who give you lots of tissue paper or table napkin or ketchup packets. Saying thanks is sweatless and it brings forth so much happiness and fulfillment to the workers. It's easy to make people feel good about themselves and their work.

Receive

Don't hesitate accepting pamphlets of restaurants you'll never visit this lifetime or brochures of houses for sale (even if you already have a house). They're for free, for crying out loud. Receiving won't make you perspire. You just extend your hand, and maybe you can crack a smile and say thanks too. You are not even required to keep the pamphlets or have them laminated. Recycle them into stationery or make paper airplanes out of them.

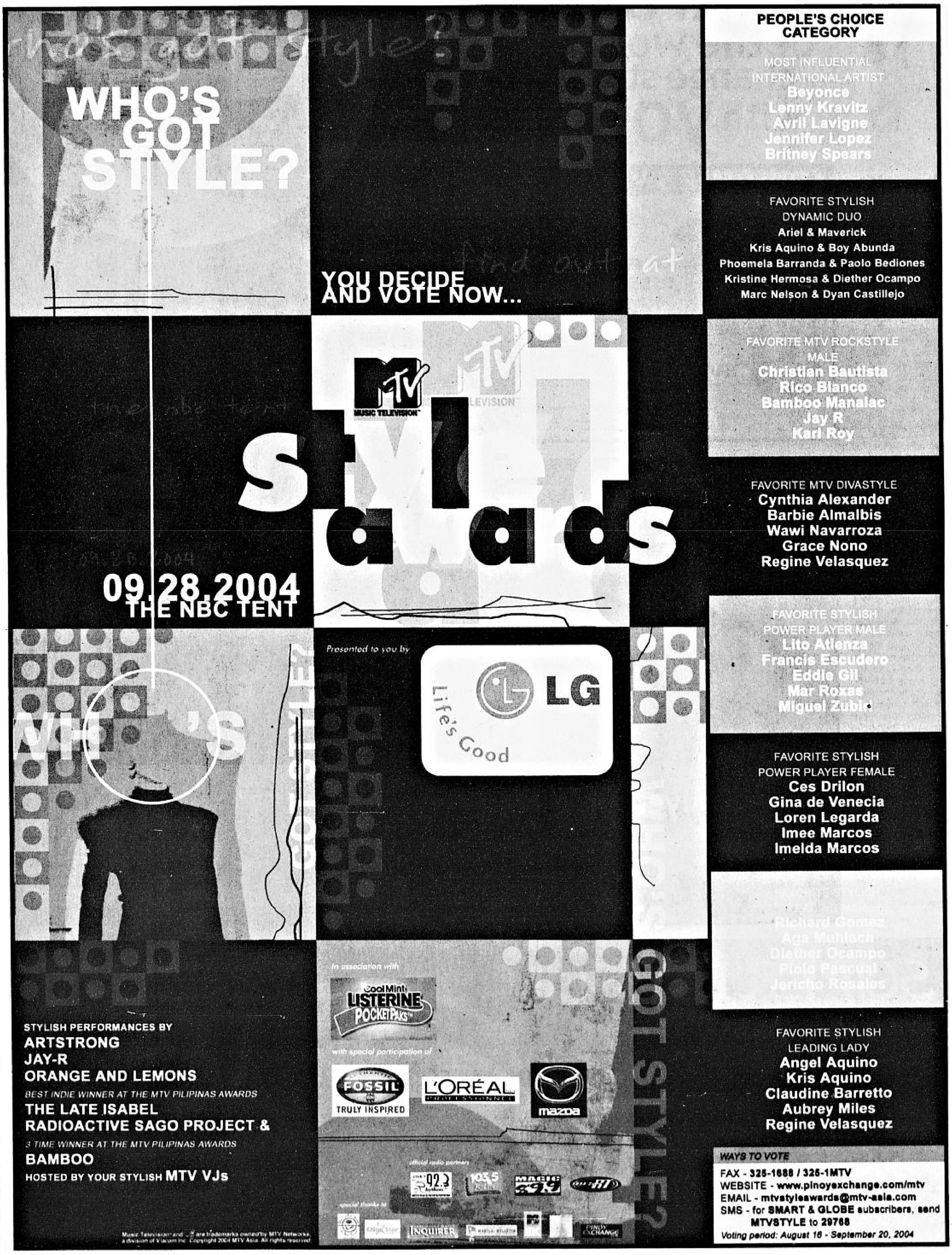
Pay attention

Everybody knows yakking your esophagus out to sleeping beauties is traumatic, so just imagine how rotten demo guys feel when they are tasked to perform with or without an audience. If you're just killing time waiting for someone, you may want to watch a full demo, which not a lot of us really do. Consider it a crash course or your contribution to making the world a better place to be in, whatever. But make sure you do pay attention, and maybe ask some pertinent questions too for effect.

Chitchat

Some salespeople probably run out of saliva by noon, or at least their saliva gets spoiled due to non-use. Most of them must be so bored doing the same things and seeing the same environment every single day. Some are even isolated or challenged to stand for approximately 100 hours a day. Break the monotony in their lives by offering some chitchat. Crack a corny joke. Compliment them on their superb stockings. Ask about the store decor, whatever. Some chat can probably be the highlight of their day. How shallow, how sad, how true. But you can slap a smile on their long faces, even for just a couple of seconds.

E-mail the mallmonkey at marksablan_2bu@yahoo.com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KRISTINA playing with handsome little Daryl

Choosing the children first

Text and photo by Cheryl Tiu
2bU! Correspondent

IT WAS a Friday night, and after having gone through a series of incredibly bad events, I thought it was best that I stayed home. Based on the luck I've had that day, I'd probably get killed on the way to Greenbelt.

I guess it turned out to be a blessing in disguise since my friend Kristina, who was visiting from the US, called me and invited me to come with her to an orphanage the next morning.

I was hesitant at first. Apart from having a lot of exams the next week, I've never really been good with kids.

But I shrugged to myself, "Why not?" Everything that could possibly go wrong had already gone wrong that day, so what's playing with kids for a few hours? Besides, I heard my mother's perpetual advice—on how we are happiest when helping others—reverberating in my head.

And so I went with Kristina to the Chosen Children Village (CCV), an established home-environment community that cares for physically and mentally challenged children abandoned by their parents, in Silang, Cavite.

We arrived there around 9 a.m. (having gone through quite an adventure along the way—getting stranded by the Carmona Exit and having to get down and push the car to start). We were part of the International School Manila (ISM) group, headed by Kristina's former Psychology teacher, Mr. Owen, who volunteered there quite frequently.

ILLUSTRATION BY ANTHONY MISTADES

Spic-and-span village

It was my first time there and upon walking into the village, the first thing that came out of my mouth was, "It's so clean!" It was very much unlike the other villages I had been to. It had an administration/clinic building, a six-classroom school, an adoration chapel, a physical, occupational and aqua therapy treatment center, a nutrition center and nine cottages (housing the children and staff members) which were all—without exaggeration—impeccable and very well-maintained.

The moment we entered one of the cottages, a small boy wearing a helmet took my hand. He kept pulling me toward the door and calling me, "Mama."

His name was Ivan and he was so sweet. I took his hand and let him drag me around while he told me he wanted to play outside.

I asked one of the volunteers why he was wearing a helmet and she said it was because he had hydrocephalus, the abnormal buildup of cerebrospinal fluid in the ventricles of the brain. I felt really bad upon hearing that and I became more determined to help him enjoy his day.

We took all the kids to the playground where several of the ISM students were playing with the other kids as well. Kristina was calling me to help her out with Jenny, an incredibly hyper little girl who was so adamant in getting to the monkey bars' apex. We traded places with handling Ivan and Jenny, and I was suddenly overcome with apprehension.

Jenny kept pulling away from my grasp to climb higher and higher, until I could barely reach her anymore. She was so tiny, I was so scared she'd completely slip out from my fingers and fall!

Apparently, all she wanted to do was to cross from one end of the monkey bars to the other, so I held her as high as my 5'1" frame could, as she swung from one bar to another until we reached the end. I was ready to put her down when she energetically spun around, motioning that she wanted to do another round. And another. And another. And another. Whew!

Two mamas

Later on when I was back to playing with Ivan, another little girl, Genevieve, came up to us and tried to pry Ivan's hand off mine. Ivan clutched mine tighter and pointed at me, saying "Mama" all the while.

Genevieve instead pointed to herself as "Mama." Ivan looked at me, then at her, and a second later the two of them were holding each other's hands.

I couldn't help smiling to myself when I saw this scene. I took them to the swings and we joined some of the other ISM students and CCV children who were selling pastries to the village's construction workers.

At lunch time, Kristina and I went into the cottage for the handicapped. The volunteer assigned us to a young boy, Ryan, seated on in wheelchair and who, we were told, could neither see nor hear.

We put on the plastic caps that were mandatory for sanitary feeding and we took turns feeding Ryan, using the towel doubling as a bib to wipe off the food particles trickling down his chin. He was really patient and showed no bouts of irritation, despite his condition.

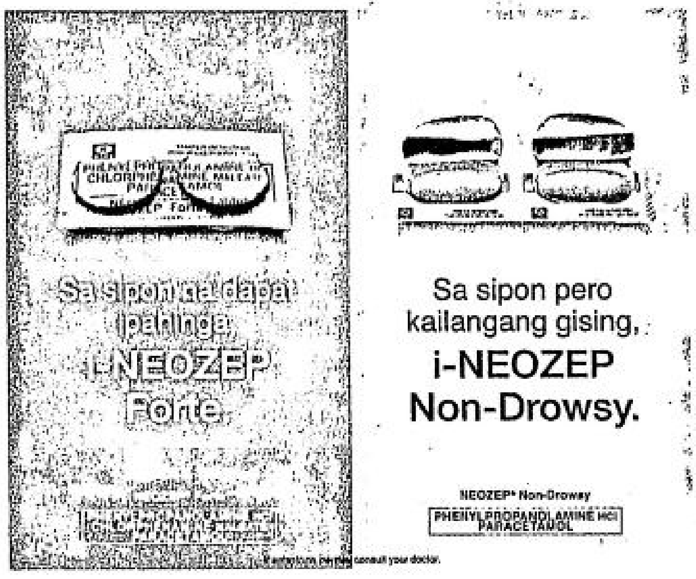
In a while, it was time for us to leave. As we walked the kids to the Nutritional House for their lunch, I looked back at the morning we had spent with them. The night before, I was so preoccupied with wallowing in my own misery, that all I did was mope and feel sorry for myself.

A friend once told me that self-pity was the most useless emotion, and she was right, especially since there are so many other people worse off than I am. These children have so much more to be upset about, yet they are the ones celebrating life with so much vigor.

> These children have so much more to be upset about, yet they are celebrating life with so much vigor

Chosen Children Village is located at Km. 48 Lalaan, Silang, Cavite. Call (046) 4142667 or (046) 4142669. E-mail chosen@mozcom.com or visit http://chosenchildren.bizland.com

E-mail the author at chloe_dominique@yahoo.com



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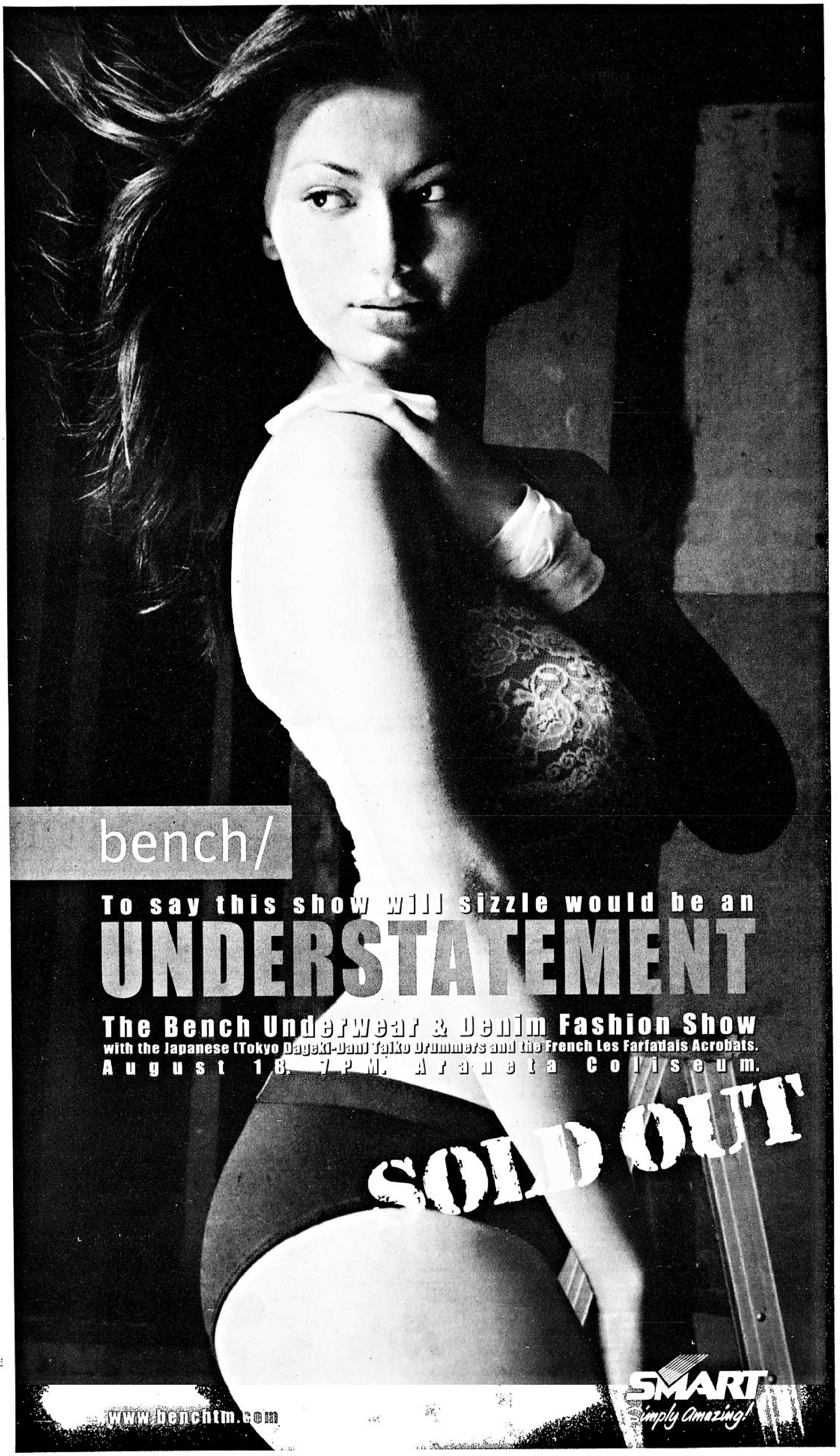

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U r never 2 young to donate blood

Text and photos by Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

In February, the pledge of love takes centerstage. And although the month of red felt hearts and cupid cutouts may be over, another pledge is still in the spotlight for the Philippine National Red Cross (PNRC)-Red Cross Youth Department (RCY): its Pledge 25 campaign.

Pledge 25 is a project of the PNRC-RCY Department in support of the voluntary blood donation drive. It encourages young blood givers to pledge to donate blood three to four times a year starting at the age of 18 until they reach 25 years old.

Last Jan. 30, GMA Artist Centre's Maybelyn de la Cruz donated 450 ml of blood after she was officially launched as the latest Pledge 25 endorser.

Following the footsteps of the late Rico Yan and replacing matinee idol Piolo Pascual, 21-year-old Maybelyn will have her already tight sked becoming even tighter as she will hold motivational talks and nationwide school campaigns plus regular visits to the blood bank to donate her blood for the next years of her life.

Why Maybelyn? Romeo S. Orilla, manager of the RCY department, explains that the former "Ang TV" star perfectly fits the bill because of her healthy lifestyle and big, big heart. Apart from supporting the Kythe Foundation, a foundation for cancer-stricken kids, she has her own foundation called YES (Youth and Elderly In Service), which extends a helping hand to the handicapped. The group assists other organizations in raising funds for projects and solicit wheelchairs and hearing aids from politicians and businessmen.

On Saturdays, when she doesn't have work, Maybelyn teaches kids at the local church. Most especially, she lives a clean life full of nutritious food and exercise, a life without smoking, drinking and illegal drugs.

This is the first time Pledge 25 is getting a female endorser. "This time we selected a woman because most of the women are afraid (to donate blood)," says Orilla. With a flush of blood donated on a monthly basis, who wouldn't be scared? Maybelyn dela Cruz, who plays Faith in the GMA soap "Twin Hearts," definitely isn't afraid, and she hopes to convince more women and men to give a part of themselves to the very noble cause of blood donation.

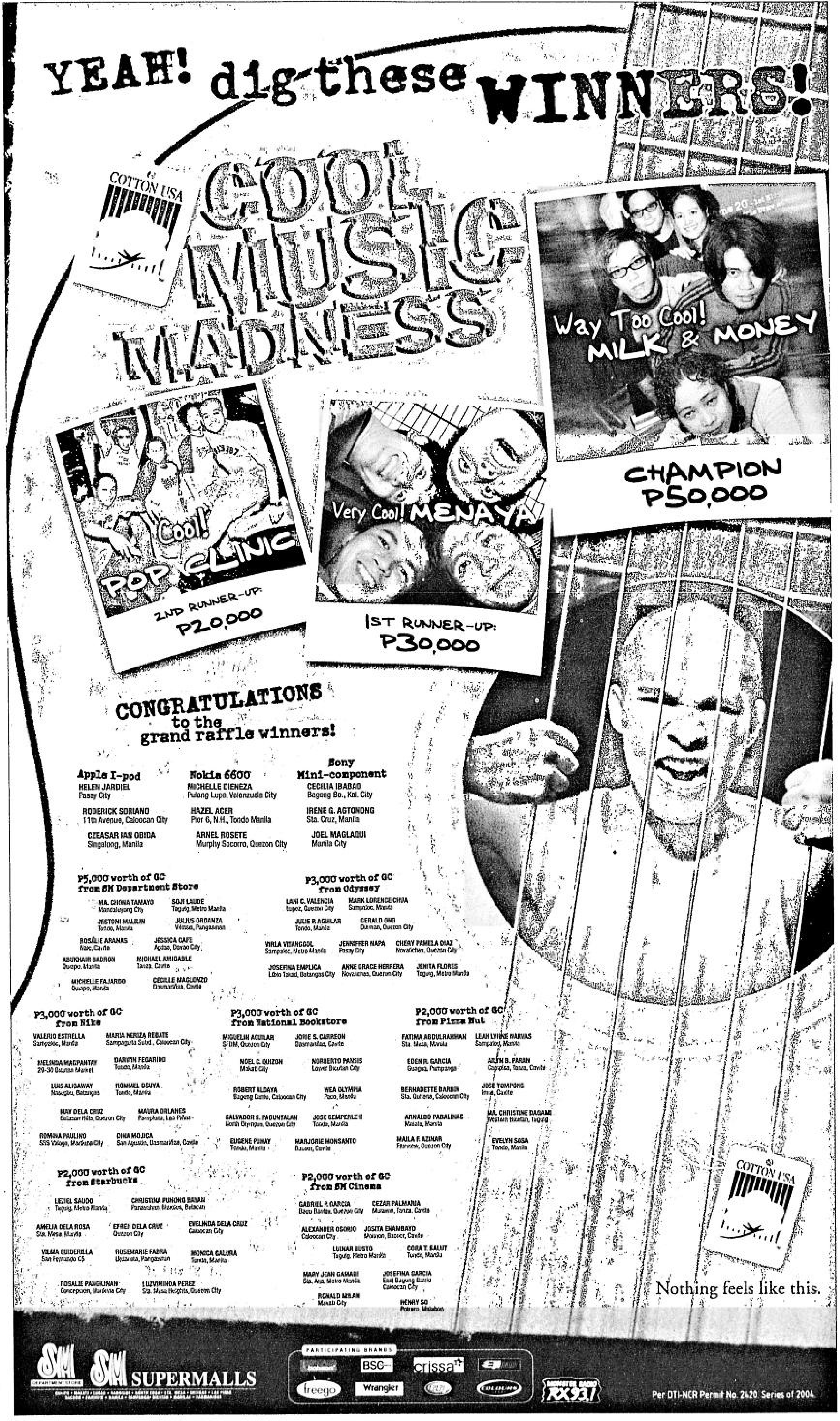
"I've always wanted to be a part of some organization that not only reaches out to people but touches lives as well. I'm doing this because I want to feel that rewarding feeling that comes with the knowledge that my effort could spell the difference between life and death for a fellow human being. I want to save lives and at the same time, inspire others to save lives," says the outspoken De la Cruz, whom we all remember as that chubby little girl from "Home Along da Riles."

Advantages

Becoming a voluntary blood donor has many advantages apart from having the privilege to save another person's life, if that's not enough.

For starters, a physician examines prospective blood donors so they can know their blood type and hemoglobin level. Screening tests also detect anemia, HIV, malaria, syphilis

U R/D3



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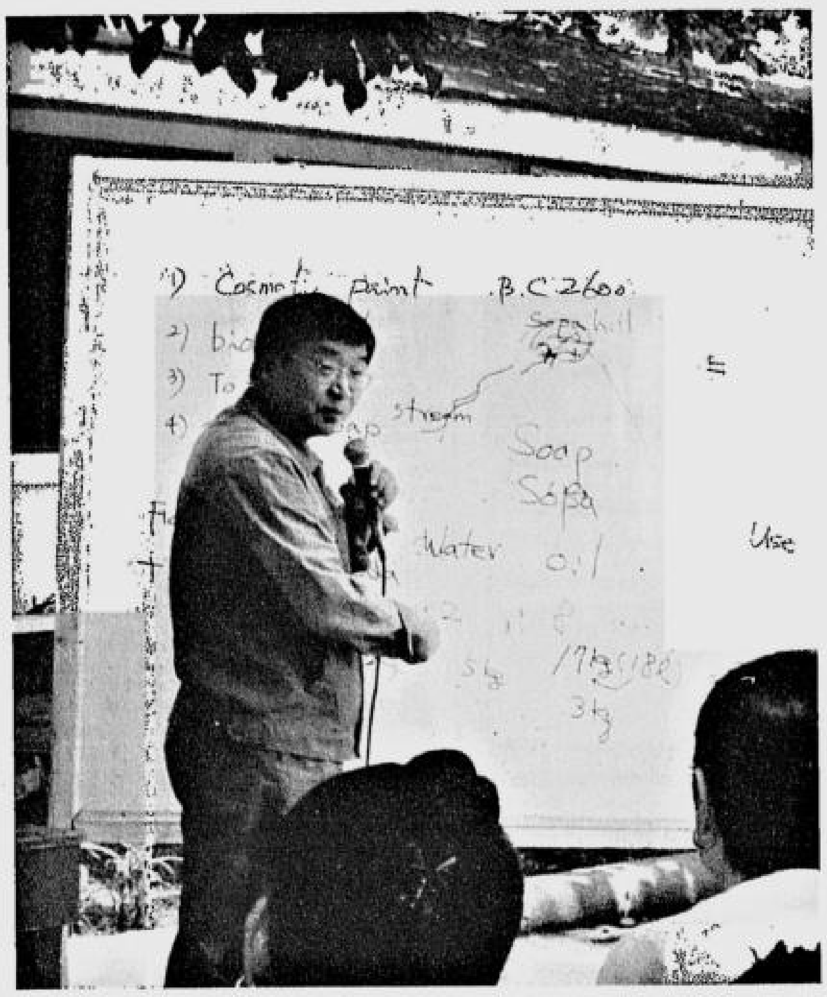
Saving through soap suds



KIM Byeong Kyu explains the benefits of soap made from used cooking oil.

MATERIALS for soap-making

Text and photos by Bianca Consunji
2bU! Correspondent

NOT all of us are born crusaders. Admittedly, I have a tendency to blank out during some conversations, especially those filled with words such as "advocacy," "environment" and "good cause."

So, a few weeks ago, when my mom began telling me about some new project she was getting involved in, I suddenly discovered that I had places to go and people to see.

"Ah, mom, I have this pressing appointment with my prof in Comparative Literature!"

"But it's 6 a.m. on a Sunday—"

"—Oh, we're holding makeup sessions, see you later!"

The sounds of a slamming door and screeching tires followed. You get the idea: Saving the world was never my thing.

So it came as a surprise to both of us when I came crawling back to her for ideas for the "Change the World" issue. Turns out that the new project she was working on was actually pretty worthwhile: It was a soap-making project. And not just any soap either—it was soap from used cooking oil!

Before you balk at the idea, listen up. The cooking oil is processed before being made into soap, so there's no chance of you smelling like last night's fried chicken.

Good causes

But why use cooking oil in the first place? Why not lavender or orange essential oil? Apparently, the Green Environment Soap company, headed by Mr. Kim Byeong Kyu, isn't manufacturing soap for mere profit, but for several good causes.

First on the list is the environment. Since people usually just throw out cooking oil after using it a few times, the oil goes straight into the waterways, whether you dispose of it directly into a body of water, into the soil or down the drain.

Research shows that it takes 40,000 cups of water to negate the effects of one cup of oil—apparently, that extra-large order of french fries is harming not just your health, but also major waterways around the country. Think of the copious amounts of cooking oil disposed all over the country, and you'd realize why the Pasig River is that polluted. The burden is simply too heavy for nature to carry.

Speaking of health, doctors have also discovered that recycled oil is actually harmful. Each time oil is heated, more trans-fatty acids are produced, causing indigestion and sometimes, even stomach cancer. So forget that oil ad which claims its product can be used seven times. It's just plain unhealthy.

Ever heard of soap made from used cooking oil? Well, it's less costly, more environment-friendly and gentler to skin and fabrics!

However, lots of people aren't aware of that. Some dealers even buy used oil from fast-food companies in order to resell them, with the pitch that the oil they're selling "tastes just like Jollibee's Chickenjoy." Of course, local fast-food companies are glad to get rid of all that grease; after all, there's nothing else to do with it.

However, in other countries such as Korea, fast-food giants McDonald's and KFC are more astute. They have their used cooking oil processed into soap to give away to their customers. Yup, those are still marketing strategies, but at least they're health- and environment-friendly.

Easy procedure

So one day, just to see what the whole thing was all about, I went to Mr. Kim's house to try out the procedure, which wasn't difficult at all. Heck, my 11-year brother was making soap bar his own.

The process itself took a minutes. The cooking oil wa tered through a wire scr mixed with caustic soda and ter, poured into molds and le dry (which would take a days.) The powdered soap, on other hand, needed a sepa machine to be processed.

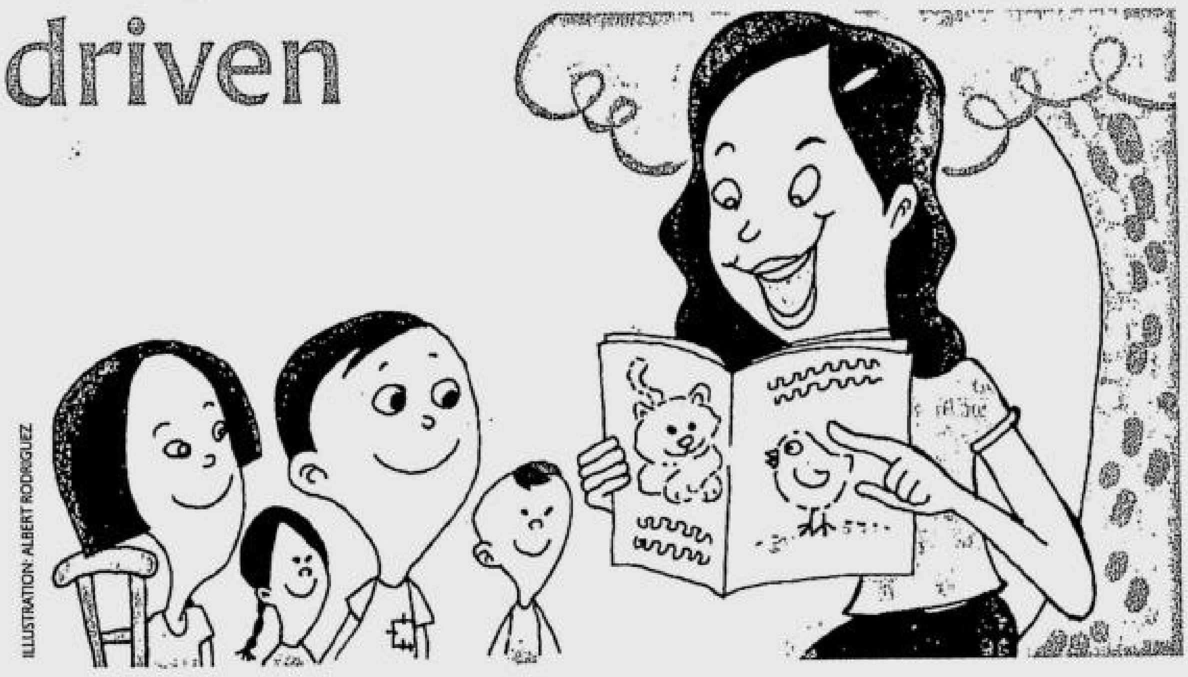
Somehow, the procedure c pletely changes the composi

STUDENTS from St. Mary's C

Living a purpose-driven life

By Maureen Tañedo
2bU! Correspondent

Gena has found focus and inner peace in her volunteer work among children and abused women. Yet she remains a student at heart



THERE'S something different about Gena, an 18-year-old BS Management Engineering sophomore.

Gena is not the type to toot her own horn, but she is doing something many of her peers wouldn't even dream of. She is heavily involved in projects that help kids who are poor, abused, disabled or otherwise helpless to improve their lives.

When she began her college education at Ateneo de Manila, Gena volunteered for ANI (Alay ni Ignacio), Kythe, Tugon (working for CRIBS) and the Make-A-Wish Foundation Philippines (see sidebar for contact information of these organizations).

While ANI is more academic in nature, with college students like Gena teaching public high school students to prepare them for college, Kythe, Tugon and Make-A-Wish are organizations devoted to nurturing and caring for kids with disabilities and/or sicknesses. CRIBS (Create Responsive Infants by Sharing), meanwhile, to which Tugon is affiliated, has two programs catering to abandoned and neglected babies and abused women.

What does Gena derive from her volunteer work?

"I think the rewards are hard to put into words," she says. "It gives me courage, definitely. To think that I can go out into the world and do something good for it makes me a braver person."

Gena says she has always been a worrywart, but her exposure to volunteerism has given her some focus and stability.

"What I do calms me inside, so that I really am able to find my peace. It has given me a more positive outlook toward life in general. I am able to trust and hope that things will be okay, that problems can be solved, and that maybe, if only we all tried hard enough, the world can be changed," she explains.

But she has not forgotten school. For all her work with NGOs, Gena is a consistent dean's lister, and is also active in many school organizations.

"I do write for our Filipino magazine in school, and I am involved in a film organization. I'm a film nut. I try to make time for my favorite sports on weekends. I love reading books, and I'm into a little bit of photography. And of course, there's nothing like spending time with my friends. But for the most part, I'm just a kid struggling through college," she says.

Her experience has taught her that doing something beyond school and the everyday concerns of teenage life has its merits.

Her advice? "I think the important thing is to focus on what you really want, to share and only involve yourself when you know you can fully give yourself to it," she says. "It's easier to make sacrifices for the things you know are worth doing. And I am lucky, because I have found what those things are for me."

Call CRIBS Philippines Inc. (through Tugon) at 6815921, 6818078 and 6819708, fax 6471329 or e-mail cribsnet@info.com.ph. Look for Jhoel Loanzon (Volunteers Resource Program assistant).

Call Kythe Philippines at 9288172 or 0919-6069627.

Call Make-A-Wish Foundation at 8401553, fax 8401553 or e-mail wish@bestwish.org.ph or leny4wish@yahoo.com.

Contact ANI at 0917-8179099 (Yuri Barcelona) or 0919-5249300 (Hubert Uy).

E-mail the author at maunster@gmail.com

An hour a day for children

children's hour
ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

By Danicar Mariano
2bU! Correspondent

Children's Hour is the funding agency behind many projects that help uplift the lives of underprivileged kids

CHILDREN'S Hour is one of the most successful grant-giving NGOs in the world. The Philippine version alone has raised about P90 million in cash and services for less privileged Filipinos since its inception in 1999.

It funds worthy projects aimed toward the development of children who live on the streets, suffer from disease or abuse, or are simply deprived of proper care. In a dog-eat-dog society where children are born to such harsh environments not of their fault or choosing, Children's Hour opens up opportunities for them to uplift their lives.

Children's Hour is the funding agency behind many projects and institutions that provide kids with education, support, and the message of comfort and hope that people in society are still willing to take responsibility and stand up for those not yet able to help themselves.

Built on the clever campaign that every peso can make a difference, Children's Hour asks for a person's one-hour salary a year. For every Filipino earning an average of P10,000-15,000 a month, this means a deduction of only P65-P95 pesos from his or her annual salary. Quite a small amount, but enough to make changes in children's lives.

For that kind of individual contribution, a big company can collect as much as P800,000 or more. In fact, Children's Hour has raised more than P24 million in 2003, thanks to the tireless work of the eight women behind Children's Hour: executive director Evangeline Mayuga and her staff composed of Baby Ragos, Rhea Alarcon, Karen Go, Ria Mateo, Marielle Nadal, Charlene Paleguin and Teresa Suan.

From writing letters to designing posters to organizing benefit functions, the Children's Hour secretariat is always a beehive of activity. The small group's immense effort and passion toward their work is what makes Children's Hour an inspiring story among NGOs—and a reason to continue doing our share to help children.

Call Children's Hour at 8941663, e-mail ask@childrenshour.org.ph or visit www.childrenshour.org.ph. The Children's Hour office is at 10/F BPI Head Office, Ayala Avenue cor. Paseo de Roxas, Makati City.

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of the oil and removes the acid, so the resulting soap is organic and biodegradable (we tried watering plants with the soap water and they didn't die.)

Aside from trying out the soap on the laundry (which my mom claimed was softer), my siblings and I tried the soap on our dogs, and it seemed to be a lot more effective than the regular shampoo we used on them before. They weren't bothered by the suds that dripped into their eyes, and they even smelled better; maybe the oil was better suited to their body's chemistry, but for some reason, they didn't smell as doggy as before.

However, a few kids and their dogs just aren't enough for the project to get off the ground. The company is planning to teach the process in various districts around the country to make it a possible livelihood project for some barangays, so they need all the help they can get.

Some NGOs and groups such as the Miriam Environmental Center have already hopped aboard by holding soap-making lectures and demonstrations, and the UP Barangay bought a machine for the powdered soap.

Right now, I still can't consider myself an environmental/health crusader—I certainly haven't done enough for the organization, although I'd like to do more (hopefully by getting more volunteers.)

Sure, I still eat my share of french fries and fried chicken, but the next time I'm making them at home, I'm setting aside the used oil. I can't bear to see 40,000 cups of water wasted on a single afternoon snack.

Join the organization, buy a machine, donate oil, do something! Contact Nancy at 0917-8175181 for inquiries.

- *E-mail feedback to biancaconsunji@yahoo.com.*

IF she can do it, so can you. Maybelyn poses with Red Cross icon Rosa Rosal (extreme right).

U r never 2 young to donate blood

From page D1

and Hepatitis B and C.

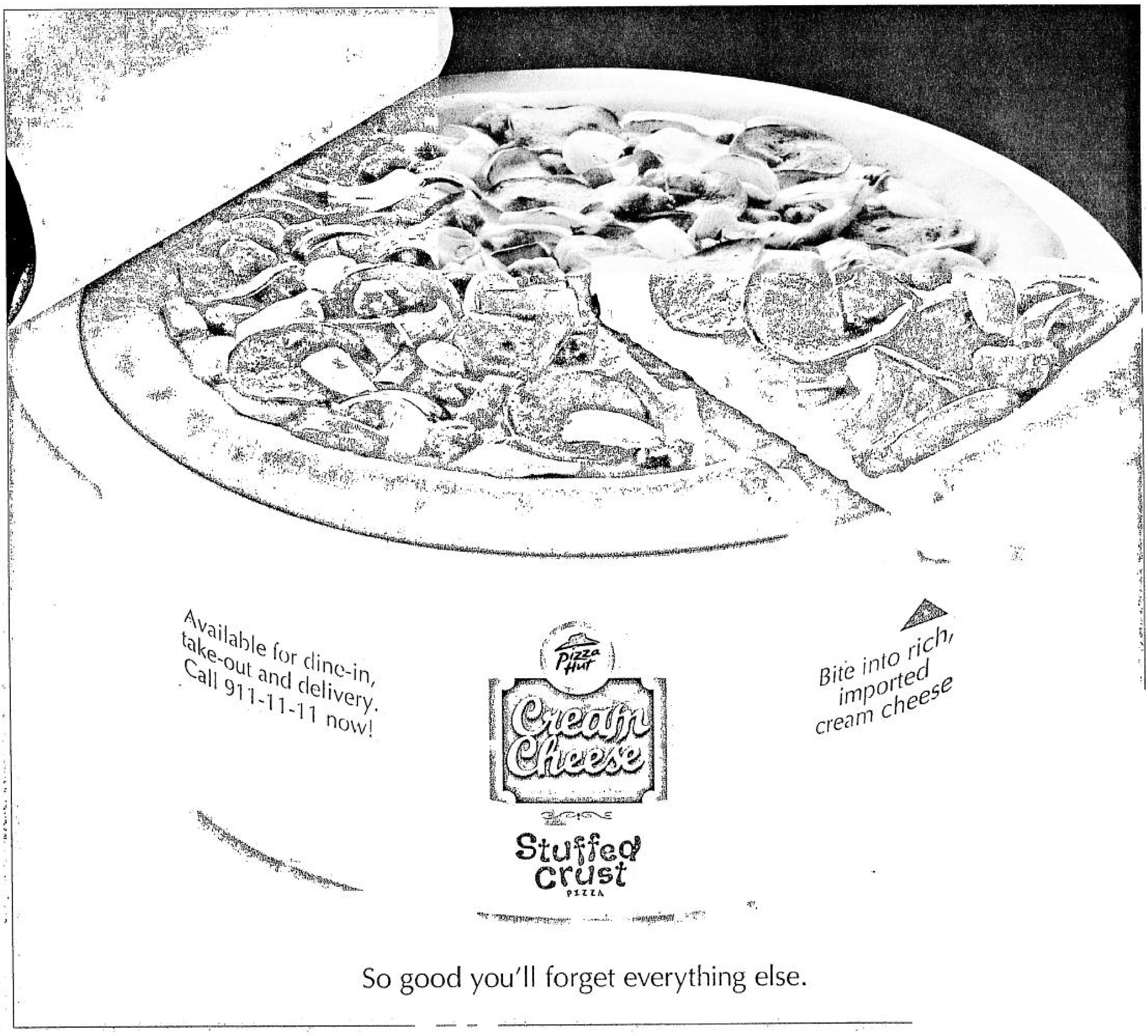
When one donates blood, one's bone marrow is also stimulated to produce new blood cells which make blood-forming organs function more effectively.

Apart from these, a blood donor gets a card that entitles him to be the priority in case of blood need. An ATM-type of ID is given after the second donation, while a pin is handed out after the third one. A pin with a different design is given every year after that.

So go ahead and make a difference by giving a part of yourself to those who badly need it. Spread love by giving blood. Pledge 25, after all, is a pledge of love.

Call the PNRC-Youth Department, 5278384 local 116, 122, 123 or 130.

E-mail the author at katotino@yahoo.com



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Volunteerism, here I come

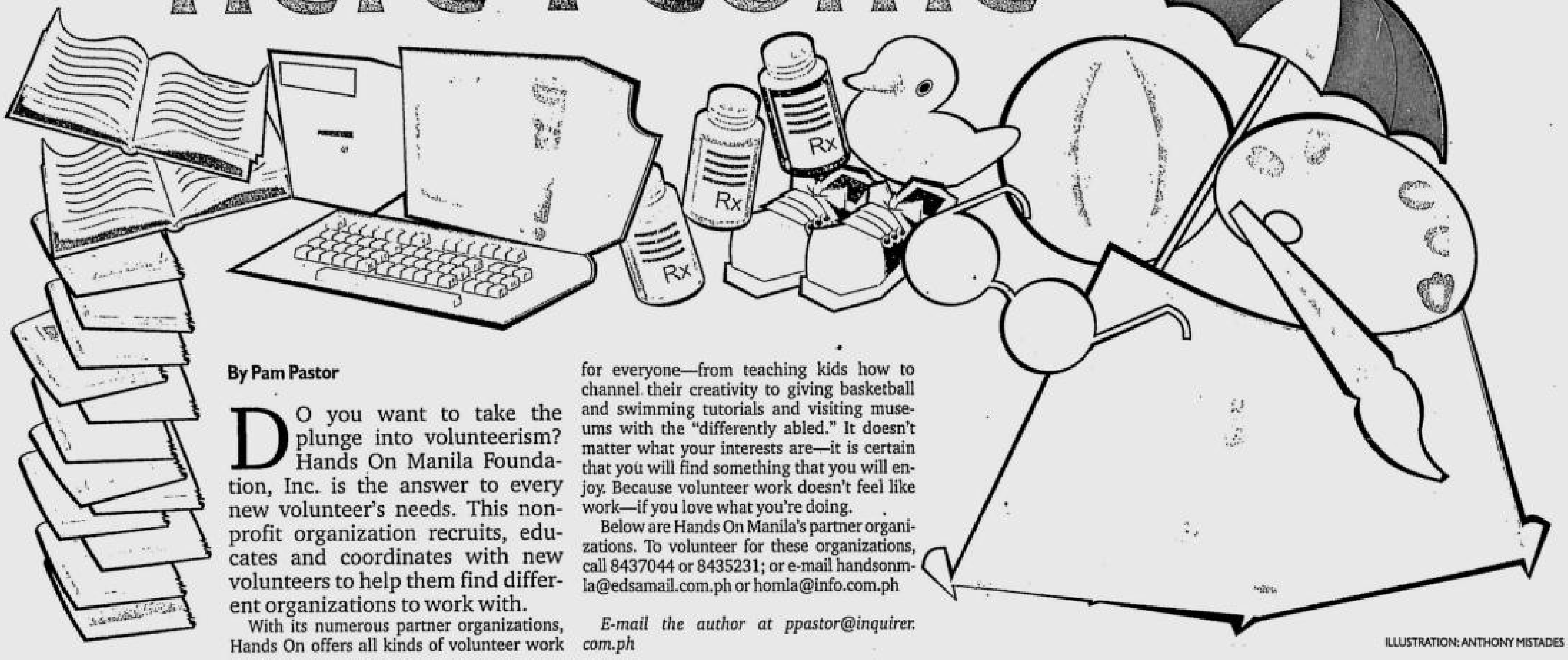

ILLUSTRATION: ANTHONY MISTADES

By Pam Pastor

DO you want to take the plunge into volunteerism? Hands On Manila Foundation, Inc. is the answer to every new volunteer's needs. This nonprofit organization recruits, educates and coordinates with new volunteers to help them find different organizations to work with.

With its numerous partner organizations, Hands On offers all kinds of volunteer work for everyone—from teaching kids how to channel their creativity to giving basketball and swimming tutorials and visiting museums with the "differently abled." It doesn't matter what your interests are—it is certain that you will find something that you will enjoy. Because volunteer work doesn't feel like work—if you love what you're doing.

Below are Hands On Manila's partner organizations. To volunteer for these organizations, call 8437044 or 8435231; or e-mail handsonmla@edsamail.com.ph or homla@info.com.ph

E-mail the author at ppastor@inquirer.com.ph

If you want to help but don't know how, you can start with this list

The orgs	The beneficiaries	What you can give (aside from your time)	How you can reach them
Asilo de San Vicente de Paul	Youth and children	Home, kitchen equipment	Call or fax 5233829, 5235206, 5235264; e-mail asilomla@compass.com.ph
In Touch Community Services, Inc.	Foreigners and Filipinos	Computers	Call 8937603, 8931893, 8937606; e-mail intouch@csi.com.ph
Tahanang Walang Hagdan	"Differently abled" people	Wheelchairs, canes and medicines	Call 6550055 to 59, 6554580; fax 6550812; e-mail sisv@skyinet.net
Feed My People International	Youth and children	Food, clothing, blankets, pillows and towels	Call 9420379, 9489475; fax 9420379; e-mail david_dario@hotmail.com
American Chamber Foundation Philippines, Inc.	Urban poor, victims of calamities, youth and children	Computers, books, school supplies and educational materials	Call 8340184, 5518060; fax 8431192; e-mail amchamfn@mozcom.com
Bukas Sarili Foundation, Inc.	Men, women, youth and children	Children's books	Call 7280721; fax 7574899; e-mail ContactUs@bukassarili.org
Childhope Asia Philippines	Children and urban poor	Clothes, educational materials, toys and healthcare products	Call 5617118, 5634647; fax 5632242; e-mail chap@childhope.org.ph or chsea@vasia.com
Bantay Edukasyon Program of the ABS-CBN Foundation	Children under the Bantay Bata rescue program	Toiletries, towels, clothes, milk, rice, medicines, storybooks, toys and equipment made from natural materials	Call 9244101 local 4551, 9224842, 4156625, 9253333; fax 9214042; e-mail foundation@abs-cbn.com
Education Volunteers Educating Filipinos	Youth and children	Office equipment	Call 7252903, 0917-5244877; fax 6387132; e-mail evolvefilipinos@mindgate.net or evolvefil@edsamail.com.ph
Eskwela ng Bayan	Public school children	Video and broadcast supplies and equipment	Call 7363925; fax 7342213
Families and Children for Empowerment and Development	High-risk families, urban poor, women, youth and children	Educational materials	Call 5626997, 5634647; e-mail fced@edsamail.com.ph
Intel Computer Clubhouse	Youth	Computers	Call 8813185; fax 8824579; e-mail atemaui@yahoo.com
Immaculate Conception Parish, Pasig	Persons with disabilities, youth, children and less fortunate parishioners	Medicines, sports equipment and art materials	Call 6407921; fax 6284489;
Jesus Loves the Little Children Foundation	Children and urban poor families	Educational and art materials	Call 6403405, 6419666; fax 8931892; e-mail chitosanchez@pacific.net.ph
Kaisahang Buhay Foundation	Urban poor, women, youth and children	Educational and art materials, children's book and equipment for babies	Call 9114180, 9132340; fax 9121160; e-mail kbf@mozcom.com
Museo Pambata Foundation, Inc.	Youth and children	Children's books and art materials	Call 5231797 to 98; fax 5221246; e-mail mads@museopambata.org
Living Free Foundation, Inc.	Families, youth and children	Computers	Call 8300889; e-mail livingfree@edsamail.com.ph
My Father's House	Youth and children	Educational and art materials	Call 5216260; fax 5216276; e-mail mfh@broline.com
Pangarap Shelter	Boys, youth and children	Educational materials	Call 5513733; fax 8341061; e-mail sonsft@info.com.ph
Rotary Food Bank and Training Center	Urban poor families, youth and children	Educational materials and medicines	Call 4307804, 4307668; fax 4307666; e-mail judgelore@roterysoup.org, rotasoup@edsamail.com.ph
Tuloy sa Don Bosco Foundation, Inc.	Youth and children	School materials, toys and clothes	Call 5602271to 72; fax 8077179; e-mail rocky@fapenet.org
Camp Explore, Inc.	Families, school organizations, youth and children	Camp equipment and tents	Call 4330066; fax 4265351; e-mail campexplore@hotmail.com
Center for Environmental Awareness and Education	Teachers, youth and children	Computers	Call 7217360; e-mail reshy@ceae.org
Clean and Green Foundation, Inc.	Urban poor and households	Office equipment and garden tools	Call 5276378; fax 5276379; e-mail cgfi@epic.net, cgfi@itextron.com
My Zoo Volunteer Group	Students, youth and children	Cleanup tools and animal cages	Call 8316117; fax 4001885; e-mail myzoo@rescueteam.com
Winner Foundation	Multi-sectoral and general public	Cleaning and gardening materials and equipment	Call 5276378 to 79; fax 6330946
Child Foundation, Inc.	Children	Children's books, toys and medical equipment	Call 9266940
Coalition of Services for the Elderly, Inc.	Elderly	Medicines	Call 7233039; fax 7220418; e-mail cose@mail.codewan.com.ph, cose@pacific.net.ph
Kabalikat ng Pamilyang Pilipino, Inc.	Children, women, out-of-school youth and those in the sex trade	Materials for instructional kits	Call 4380171; fax 4373038; e-mail kabalikat@mozcom.com
Kythe, Inc.	Books, toys and medicines	Books, toys and medicines	Call 9226370; e-mail kytheinc@yahoo.com
Lingkod E.R. Foundation, Inc.	Indigent families	Medical equipment, computers and medicines	Call 7814475; e-mail lingkoder@hotmail.com, lingkoder@rxpinoy.com
St. Luke's Medical Center Medical Social Service Department	The elderly and the medically incapacitated	Medicine, walkers, eyeglasses, incontinent pads and clothing	Call 7230101 to 19; fax 7224775, 7244227; jledesma@stluke.com.ph
Habitat for Humanity-Las Piñas	Urban poor families	Construction materials	Call 8713827; fax 8730771; e-mail habitat_lpc@yahoo.com
Habitat for Humanity-Muntinlupa	Urban poor families	Construction materials	Call 8617389; fax 5320064; e-mail habitatforhumanitymuntinlupa@yahoo.com
Habitat for Humanity-Taguig	Urban poor families	Construction materials	Call 5415251
Bukas Palad	Urban poor	Cans, bottles, newspapers and anything that can be sold; unused medicines, clothes and shoes	Call 8446354, 8441758; e-mail bpmanila@i-next.net
Holy Family Home Makati Foundation, Inc.	Children, girls and young women	Equipment for the home, educational materials, clothes and food	Call 7287092; fax 7288130
Women's Crisis Center	Women, the elderly, youth and children	Office supplies	Call 9267744, 9249315, 9225235; fax 9249315; e-mail wccmanila@pacific.net.ph
Angels Home of the Foundation of Our Lady of Peace Mission	Children and urban poor families	Clothes, toys and educational materials	Call 8527439
Foundation for Adolescent Development, Inc.	Youth and children	Office supplies	Call 7341788; fax 7348914; e-mail fadinc@codewan.com.ph
Kaunlaran para sa Kabataang Pilipino	Youth and children	Medicines for 20 community centers, milk, sports equipment, facilities for the sports development program	Call 8974446, 8954994; fax 8954994
Kaibigan Ermita Outreach Center	Children and the urban poor community	Clothes, toys and food	Call 5896665; fax 5618508; e-mail keofi@skyinet.net
Ray of Hope Foundation	Children	Clothes and toys	Call 8371766; e-mail rayofhopefoundation@hotmail.com
Pasay City Network, Inc.	People from the community and distant barangays	Training materials, cassette tapes and computers	Call or fax 5101378
Unang Hakbang Foundation	Youth and children	Art materials, children's books, snacks and food for merienda	Call 6374901; e-mail uhf_philippines@yahoo.com
Tahanan Sta. Luisa	Young girls and children	Clothes, toys and art materials	Call 5236562, 5247804
White Cross Children's Home	Young girls and children	Clothes, toys and educational materials	Call or fax 7242145

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 18, 2004
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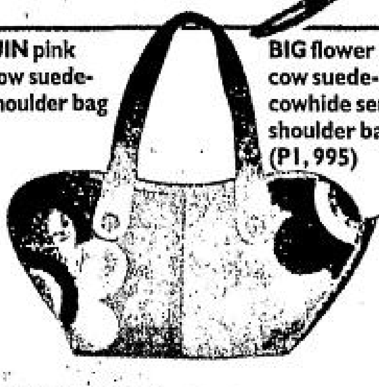
HARLEQUIN pink and gray cow suede-cowhide shoulder bag (P1, 995)



BIG flower print cow suede-cowhide semi-shoulder bag (P1, 995)

FASHION FREAKS

The seduction of bags

WALNUT and coral nubuck and crunch leather bag with Robles handle (P2, 895)

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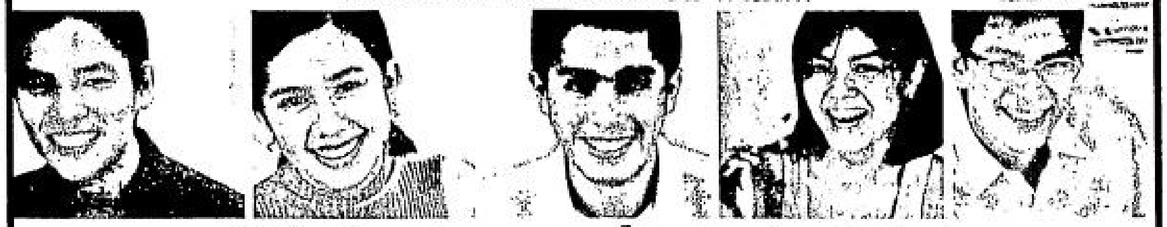
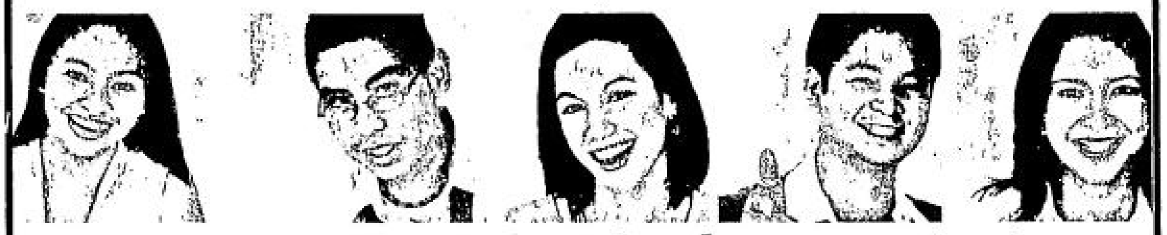
We believe ~~in~~ the power of youth, the goodness of people, and that those who have found their passion become a force of nature to be reckoned with...



We believe that we can learn as much from our students as they can learn from us...



We believe that given the right stimulus and motivation one can transform dreams into reality...

We believe that our youth are our future. Thus, we have faith in a better tomorrow.

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OCTOBER 2004 INTAKE FOR THE SCHOOL FOR ENTREPRENEURS IS NOW GOING ON.

Mesolipo FAQ's

What is Mesolipo?

Mesolipo is the latest technique from Paris. It is a non-surgical treatment that dissolves fat.

How does Mesolipo work?

The fat is dissolved by a customized mixture of natural plant extracts and vitamins placed just millimeters under the skin.

Which part of the body would benefit from Mesolipo?

While any area of the body can be treated, it works best on areas with small to moderate accumulations of fat. Liposuction is still the recommended treatment for areas with thick pads of fat.

What should a patient expect after the procedure?

There may be slight bruising, swelling and tenderness after the procedure. However, a patient would still be able to go to work and to exercise.

How many treatments are needed?

Since everyone responds to Mesolipo differently, anywhere from two to eight sessions are needed.

How frequent should Mesolipo be done?

One session should be done every two weeks.

Are all Mesotherapy treatments the same?

The results achieved are totally dependent on the quality of the ingredients used in the solutions and the expertise of the physician.

"Mesolipo truly works."
-Zsa Zsa Padilla
singer/actress

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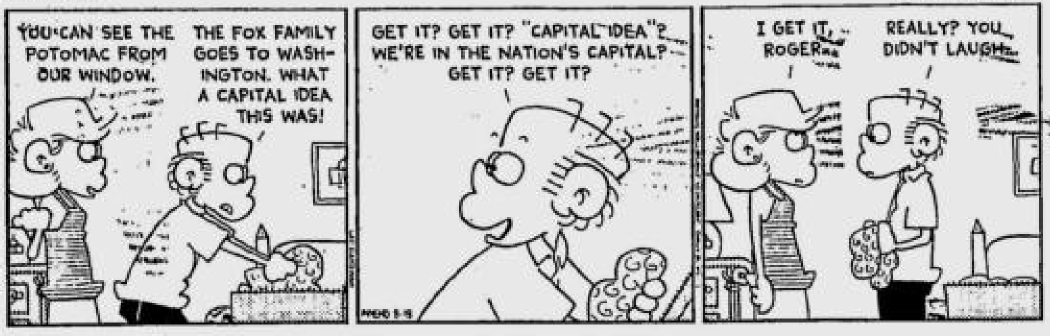
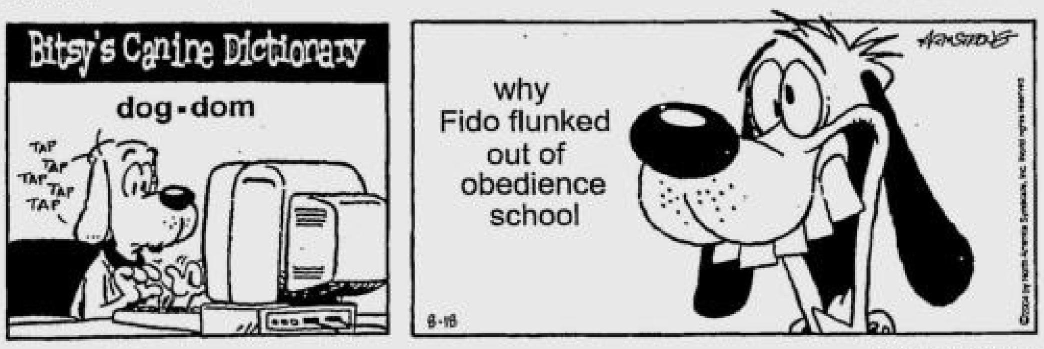
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 18, 2004

FOXTROT
BY BILL AMEND


YOU CAN SEE THE POTOMAC FROM OUR WINDOW.
THE FOX FAMILY GOES TO WASHINGTON. WHAT A CAPITAL IDEA THIS WAS!
GET IT? GET IT? "CAPITAL IDEA"? WE'RE IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL? GET IT? GET IT?
I GET IT, ROGER.
REALLY? YOU DIDN'T LAUGH.
AMEND 8-18

MARVIN
BY TOM ARMSTRONG


Bitsy's Canine Dictionary
dog•dom
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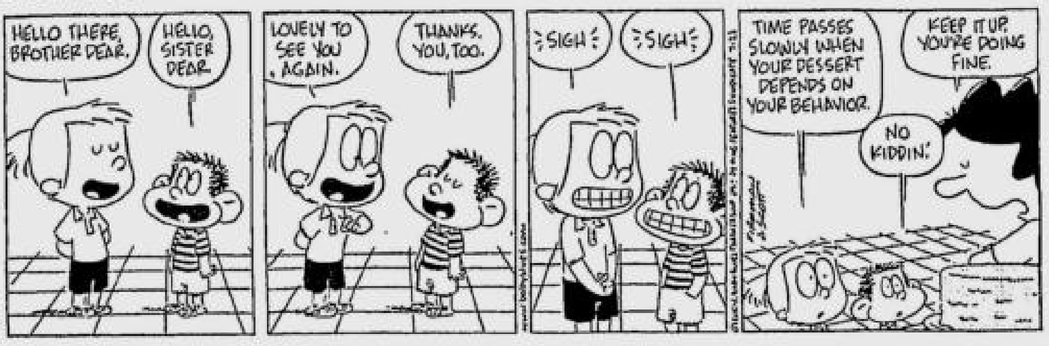
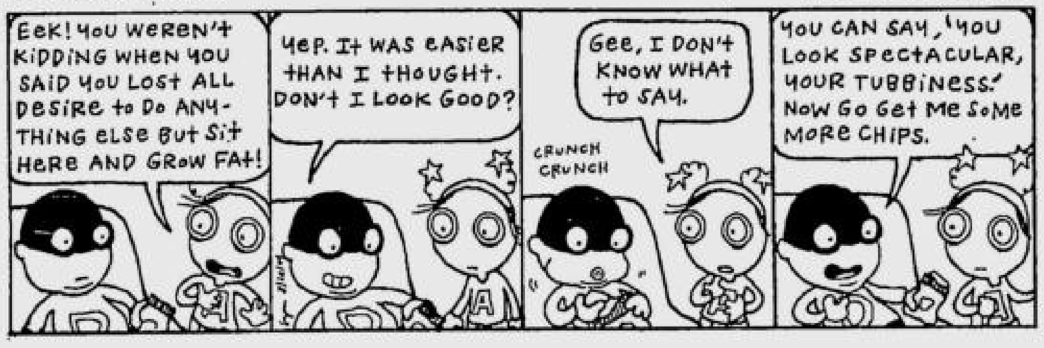
why Fido flunked out of obedience school
ARMSTRONG
8-18

BABY BLUES
BY JERRY SCOTT


HELLO THERE, BROTHER DEAR.
HELLO, SISTER DEAR.
LOVELY TO SEE YOU AGAIN.
THANKS. YOU, TOO.
SIGH
SIGH
TIME PASSES SLOWLY WHEN YOUR DESSERT DEPENDS ON YOUR BEHAVIOR.
KEEP IT UP. YOU'RE DOING FINE.
NO KIDDIN'.

ATOMO AND WEBOY
BY LYRA GARCELLANO


EEK! YOU WEREN'T KIDDING WHEN YOU SAID YOU LOST ALL DESIRE TO DO ANYTHING ELSE BUT SIT HERE AND GROW FAT!
YEP. IT WAS EASIER THAN I THOUGHT. DON'T I LOOK GOOD?
CRUNCH CRUNCH
GEE, I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY.
YOU CAN SAY, 'YOU LOOK SPECTACULAR, YOUR TUBBINESS.' NOW GO GET ME SOME MORE CHIPS.

HOROSCOPE
BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're hardly superficial. You're philosophical and deep. Your patience is your greatest friend. Challenges do not deter you. You savor life and value your experiences. You'll always pursue your personal vision of things. You're a natural leader, and you easily gain the respect of others. Major changes await you this year. (Changes for the better.)
Birthdate of: Edward Norton, actor; Patrick Swayze, actor; Robert Redford, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Be careful about what you say or do at work today. You might blurt something out that you later regret. Computer crashes are likely. Anything can happen.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): This is a very accident-prone day for children. If you are a parent, be highly vigilant of your children's activities. Romantic relationships will be bumpy . Be patient and diplomatic.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Emotional outbursts between family members are also likely. Something sudden and unexpected can happen at home or within your family dynamic.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Use caution when driving and walking today. This is definitely an accident-prone day. Think twice before you speak to others . Your knee-jerk reaction could get you in trouble.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You're definitely tempted to spend impulsively and spontaneously today. Surprise situations that affect your cash flow amaze you. (Lucky Leos will get a sudden raise or gift today.)

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You want to tell somebody off today. A buildup of tension demands release, and you'll release this anger against someone close to you. (Try not to. This serves no purpose other than to make everyone miserable.)

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You feel restless, nervous and impatient today. The troubling thing is that you're not even sure why. It's as if something is bothering you back in the recesses of your mind. (This feeling will be gone in two days.)

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Explosive arguments with friends or members of a group are likely today. You feel that your independence and/or authority is threatened. You won't allow it!

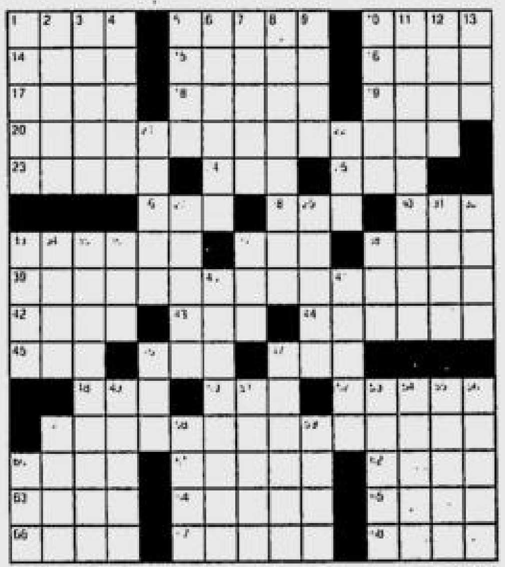
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Fights with bosses and people in authority will take place today. (You need this like a fish needs a bicycle.) Avoid these arguments if you can. Be patient for the next two days.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): If someone challenges you on religious or political grounds, you'll fight back. In fact, you're almost looking for a fight today. But is this wise? There are none so deaf as those who are wearing headphones.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You might try to free yourself from ongoing obligations or inhibiting restrictions today. Enough is enough! You want to be liberated.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Do not strike out rashly against those who are closest to you. Sudden, impulsive actions are meaningless today.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Victor Fleming
Little Rock, AR
8/18/04

ACROSS
1 Previous
5 Shuts firmly
10 Pageant ID
14 Kedrova of "Zorba the Greek"
15 French landscape painter
16 Forearm bone
17 Actor Sharif
18 Have a loan from
19 Gracile
20 Start of a quip
23 Take care of
24 Corn order
25 Show on TV
26 Endeavor
28 Clodhopper
30 Feedbag bit
33 Kind of football kick
37 Raconteur's forte
38 City south of Moscow
39 Part 2 of quip
42 Reclined
43 Very long time
44 Battery terminals
45 "The Razor's Edge"
46 Byrnes of "77 Sunset Strip"
47 Mrs. in Madrid
48 Attorneys' org.
50 McShane or McKellen
52 Spirals
57 End of quip
60 Stadium level
61 Ere
62 Utah ski resort
63 United ___ Emirates
64 Tender places
65 Himalayan legend
66 Scarlet and crimson
67 Media members
68 Actress Anna

DOWN
1 Deere output
2 Actress Anouk
3 Mark of "The High Chaparral"
4 Fortune cards
5 Dundee resident
6 Understated
7 Contest site
8 Quaker State product
9 Put in storage
10 Fish dish
11 Versatile
12 Fit of pique
13 Scenery chewer
21 Abstain from
22 One-time female mil. group
27 Marry another time
29 Doing battle
31 Soothing balm
32 Fancy marbles
33 Temple team
34 Swell!
35 Fast forward
36 Wayside hotel
37 Get the gold
38 Bout stopping letters
40 The living end
41 Make into law
46 Dino
47 Sleeper's comments?
49 Stinging remarks
51 Worship
53 Approves
54 Small harbor
55 Singer Lenya
56 Lover
57 E-mail ancestor
58 Stinging insect
59 Stack TV role
60 Black goo

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

M	A	T	H	■	E	B	B	S	■	A	D	D	O	N
I	D	E	A	■	T	R	A	P	■	L	I	A	N	A
T	E	N	T	■	T	O	T	O	■	A	N	N	O	Y
C	L	O	T	H	E	S	H	O	R	S	E	■	■	■
H	E	N	I	E	■	■	E	R	I	K	■	K	I	M
■	■	■	E	L	O	I	■	■	V	A	L	I	S	E
A	T	T	■	L	U	G	O	S	I	■	E	L	L	S
D	R	E	S	S	T	O	T	H	E	N	I	N	E	S
O	I	N	K	■	A	R	T	U	R	O	■	S	T	Y
B	O	E	I	N	G	■	■	T	A	T	I	■	■	■
E	S	T	■	E	E	L	S	■	■	U	S	H	E	R
■	■	■	F	A	S	H	I	O	N	P	L	A	T	E
L	A	B	O	R	■	A	L	D	A	■	A	N	A	S
B	L	U	R	B	■	S	A	I	L	■	N	O	P	E
J	I	M	M	Y	■	A	S	E	A	■	D	I	E	T

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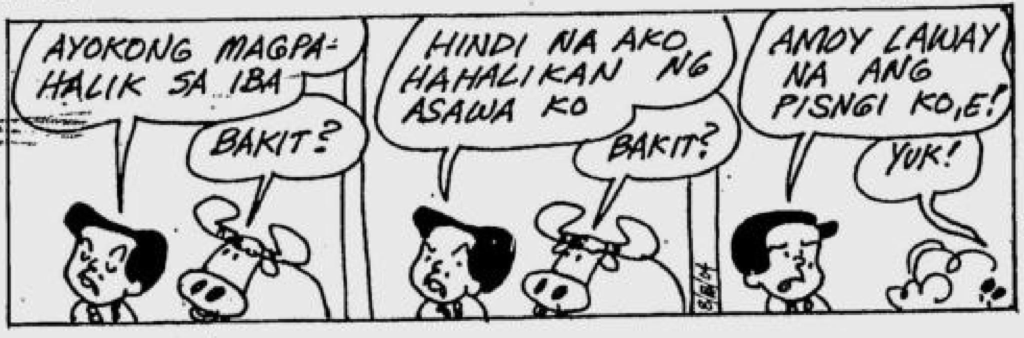
8/18/04

A. LIPIN
BY JESS ABRERA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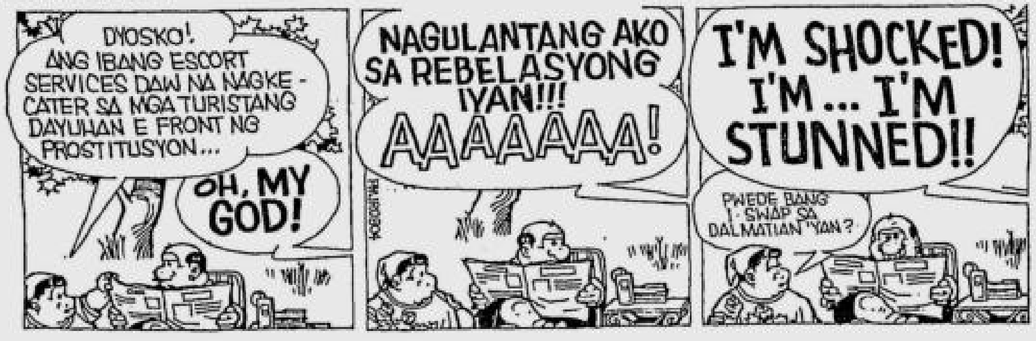
BAKIT?
HINDI NA AKO HAHALIKAN NG ASAWA KO
BAKIT?
AMOY LAWAY NA ANG PISNGI KO, E!
YUK!

PUGAD BABOY
BY P.M. JUNIOR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I'M SHOCKED! I'M... I'M STUNNED!!
PWEDE BANG I-SWAP SA DALMATIAN 'YAN?

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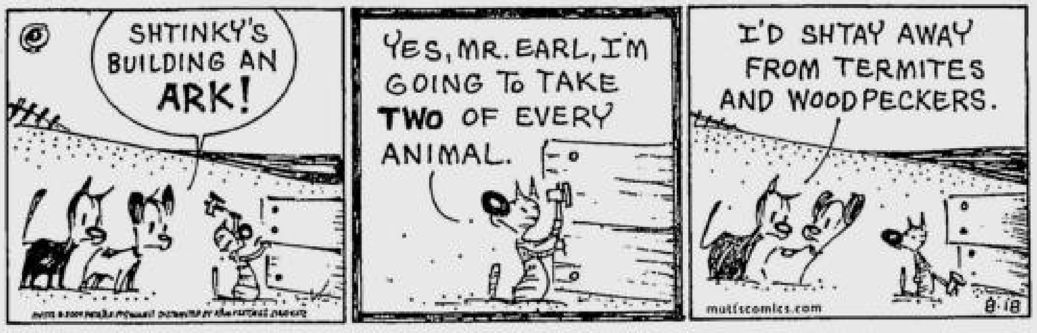
BY PATRICK McDONNELL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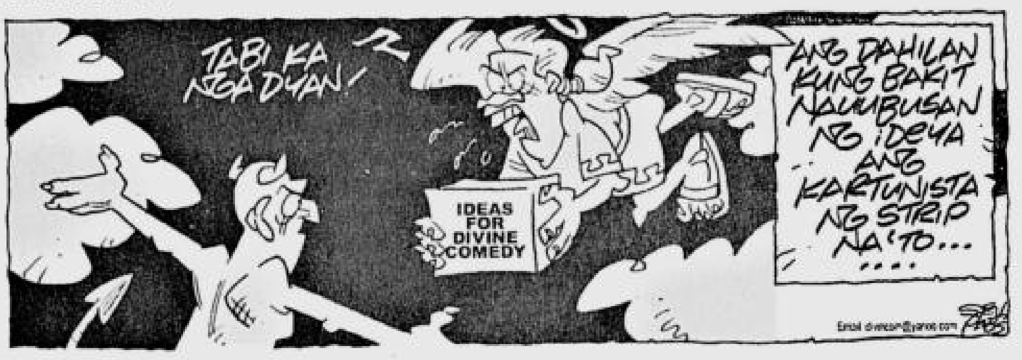
I'D SHTAY AWAY FROM TERMITES AND WOODPECKERS.
muttscomics.com
8-18

DIVINE COMEDY
BY STEVEN PABALINAS


TABI KA NGA DYAN!
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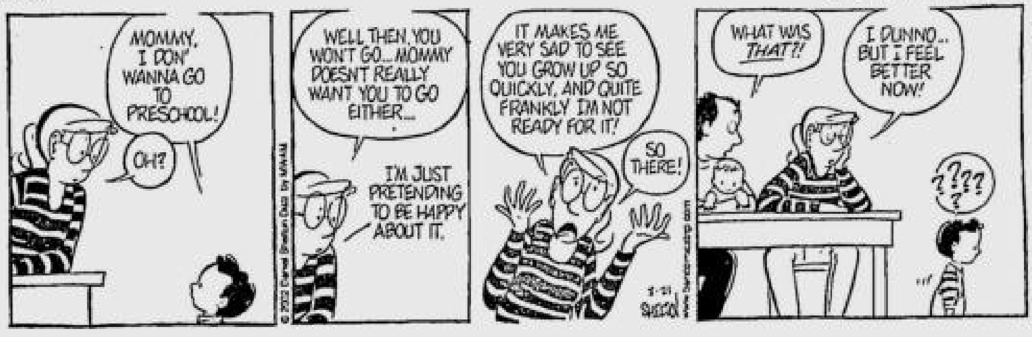
BEN
BY DANIEL SHELTON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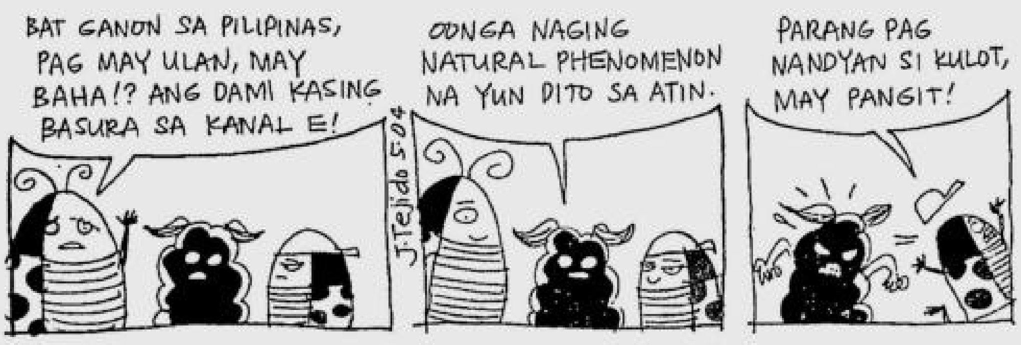
OH?
WELL THEN, YOU WON'T GO... MOMMY DOESN'T REALLY WANT YOU TO GO EITHER...
I'M JUST PRETENDING TO BE HAPPY ABOUT IT.
IT MAKES ME VERY SAD TO SEE YOU GROW UP SO QUICKLY, AND QUITE FRANKLY I'M NOT READY FOR IT!
SO THERE!
WHAT WAS THAT?!
I DUNNO... BUT I FEEL BETTER NOW!
???

MIKROKOSMOS
BY JOMIKE TEJIDO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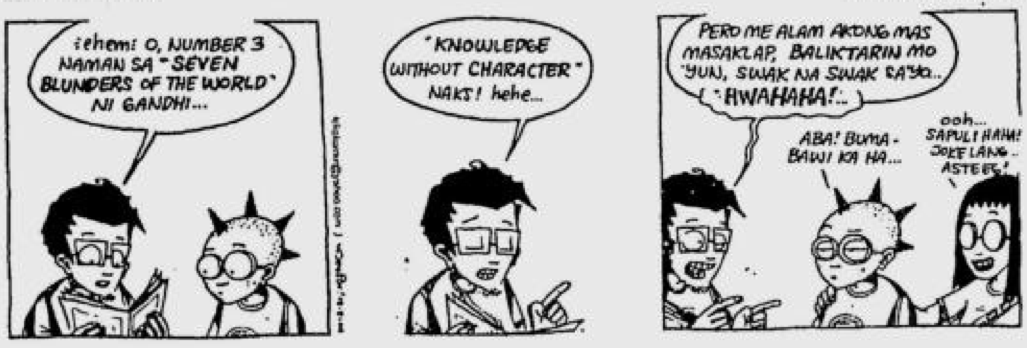
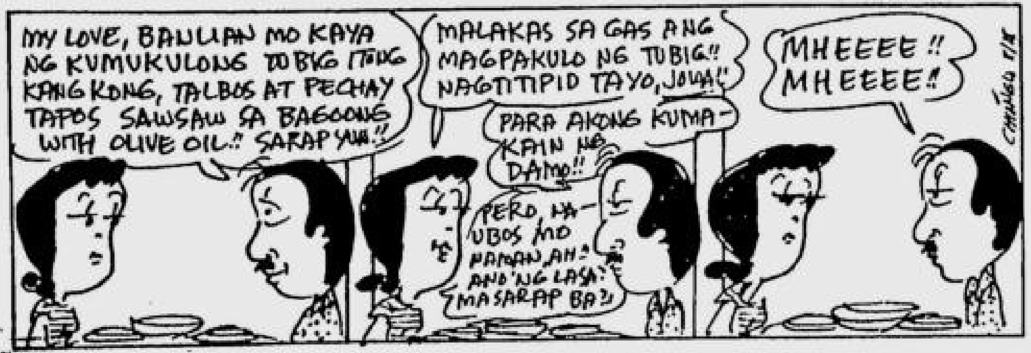
PARANG PAG NANDYAN SI KULOT, MAY PANGIT!
J.Tejido 5.04

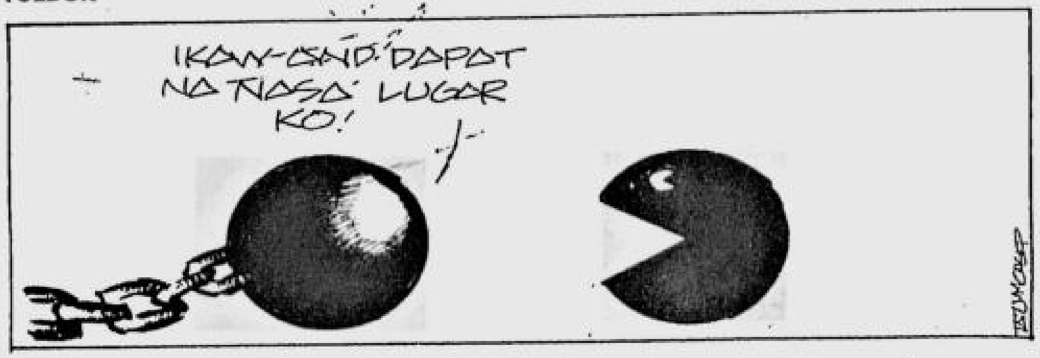
KIKO MACHINE
BY MANIX ABRERA


ehem! O, NUMBER 3 NAMAN SA "SEVEN BLUNDERS OF THE WORLD" NI GANDHI...
"KNOWLEDGE WITHOUT CHARACTER" NAKS! hehe...
PERO ME ALAM AKONG MAS MASAKLAP, BALIKTARIN MO 'YUN, SWAK NA SWAK SA'YO.. HWAHAHA!..
ABA! BUMABAWI KA HA...
ooh... SAPUL! HAHA! JOKE LANG.. ASTEEG!

LOVEKNOTS
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

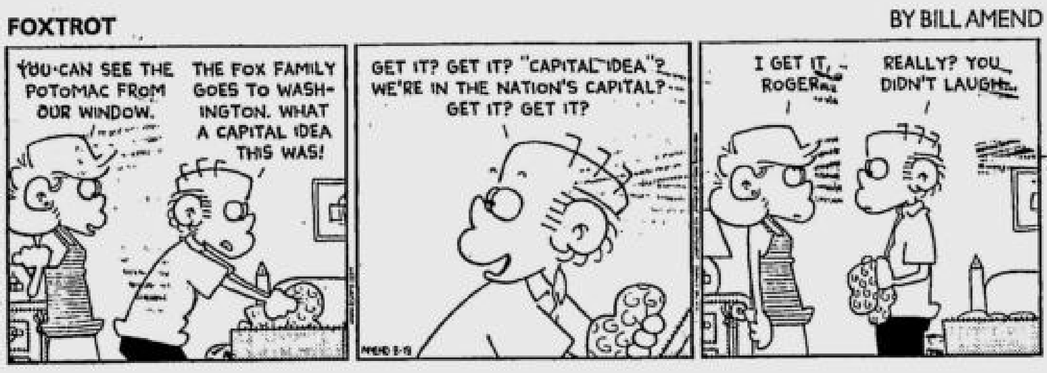

MY LOVE, BANLIAN MO KAYA NG KUMUKULONG TUBIG ITONG KANGKONG, TALBOS AT PECHAY TAPOS SAWSAW SA BAGOONG WITH OLIVE OIL.! SARAP YUN!!
MALAKAS SA GAS ANG MAGPAKULO NG TUBIG!! NAGTITIPID TAYO, JOVA!!
PARA AKONG KUMAKAIN NG DAMO!!
PERO, HA-UBOS MO NAMAN, AH! ANO 'NG LASA? MASARAP BA?
MHEEEE!! MHEEEE!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK
BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

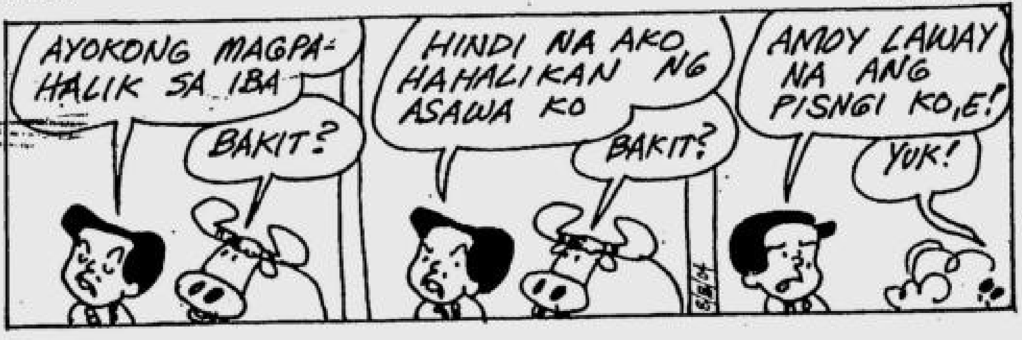

IKAW-GNO DAPAT NA NASA LUGAR KO!

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
ComicRelief
e-mail feedback at arts@inquirer.com.ph
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 18, 2004

FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND


YOU CAN SEE THE POTOMAC FROM OUR WINDOW.
THE FOX FAMILY GOES TO WASHINGTON. WHAT A CAPITAL IDEA THIS WAS!
GET IT? GET IT? "CAPITAL IDEA"? WE'RE IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL? GET IT? GET IT?
I GET IT, ROGER.
REALLY? YOU DIDN'T LAUGH.
AMEND 8-18

A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA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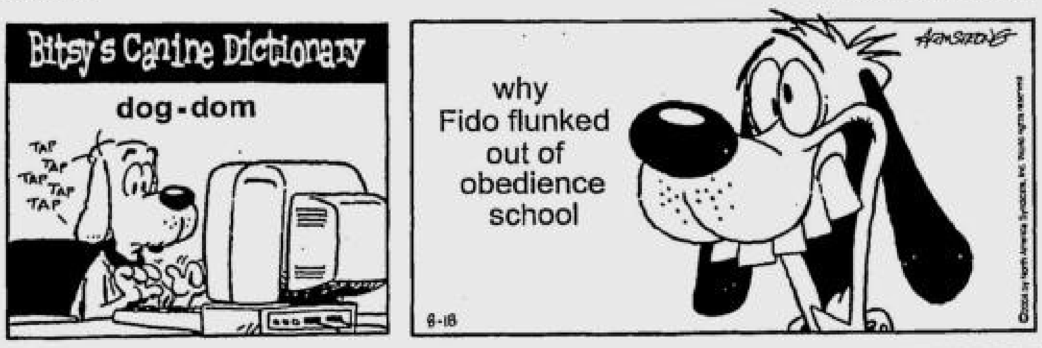
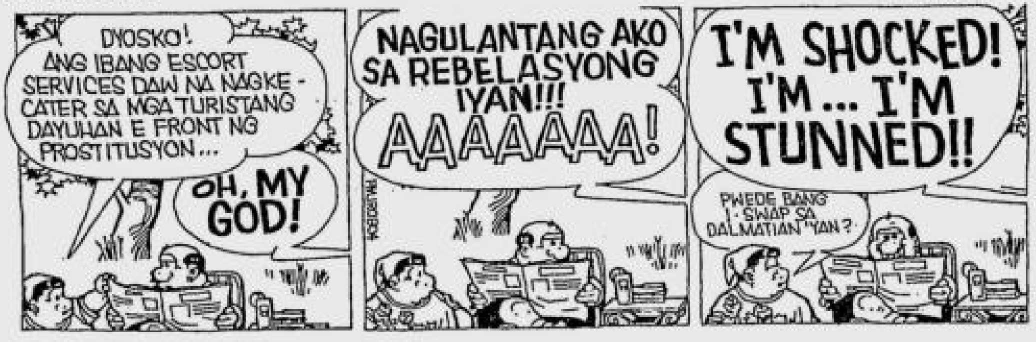
MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG


Bitsy's Canine Dictionary
dog-dom
TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP
why Fido flunked out of obedience school
ARMSTRONG
8-18

PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR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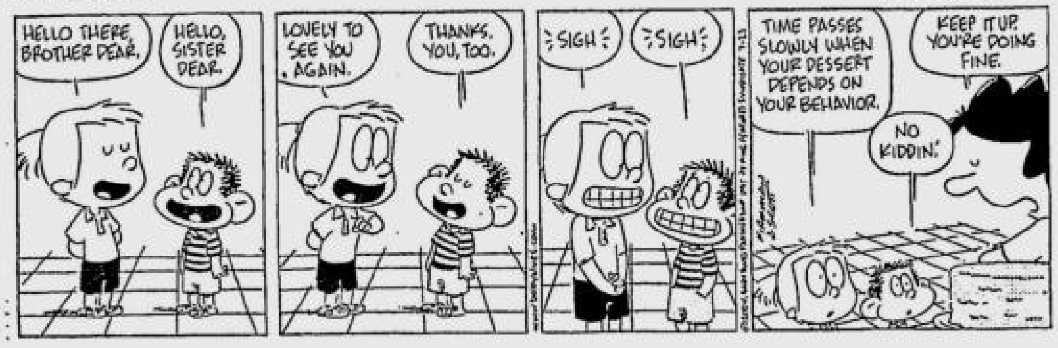
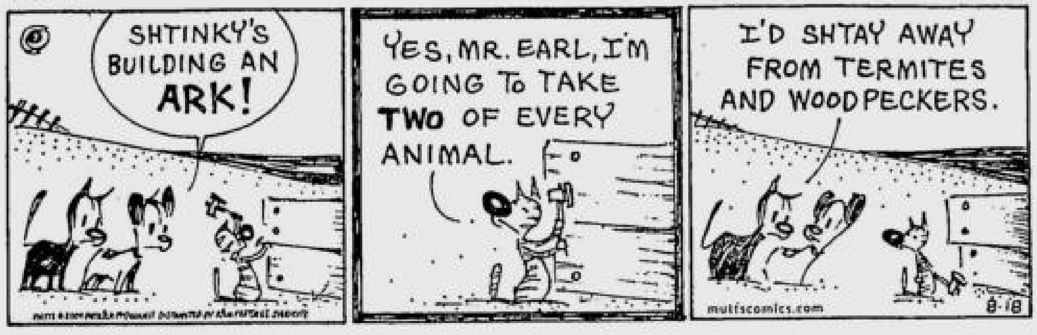
BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


HELLO THERE, BROTHER DEAR.
HELLO, SISTER DEAR.
LOVELY TO SEE YOU AGAIN.
THANKS. YOU, TOO.
SIGH
SIGH
TIME PASSES SLOWLY WHEN YOUR DESSERT DEPENDS ON YOUR BEHAVIOR.
KEEP IT UP. YOU'RE DOING FINE.
NO KIDDIN'.

MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL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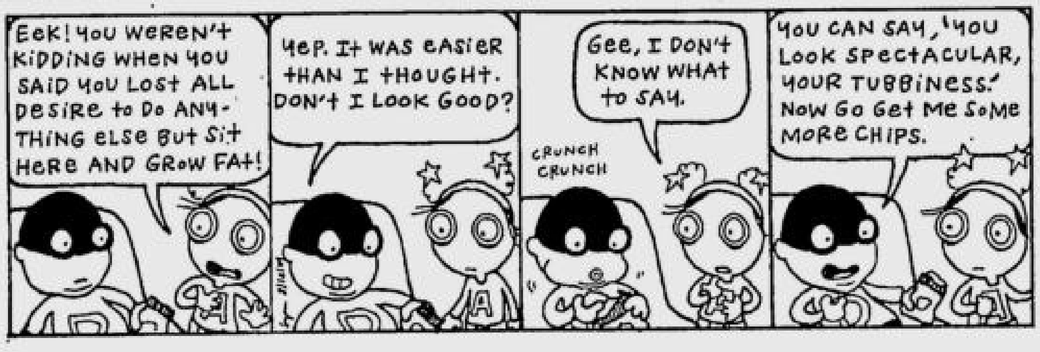
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Yep. It was easier than I thought. Don't I look good?
CRUNCH CRUNCH
Gee, I don't know what to say.
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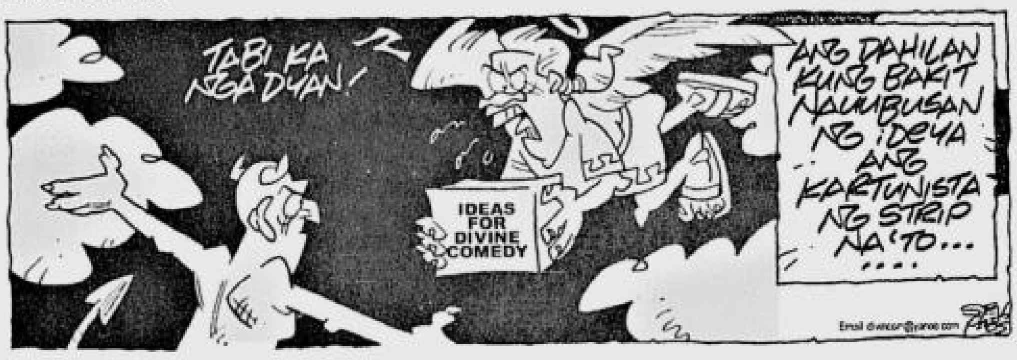
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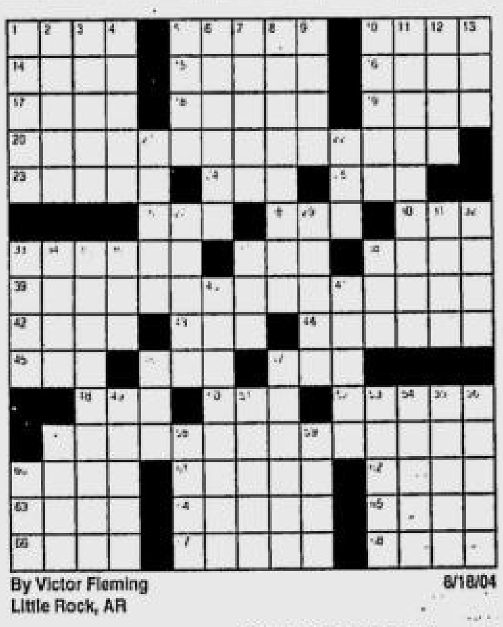

By Victor Fleming
Little Rock, AR
8/18/04

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T	E	N	T	■	T	O	T	O	■	A	N	N	O	Y
C	L	O	T	H	E	S	H	O	R	S	E	■	■	■
H	E	N	I	E	■	■	E	R	I	K	■	K	I	M
■	■	■	E	L	O	I	■	■	V	A	L	I	S	E
A	T	T	■	L	U	G	O	S	I	■	E	L	L	S
D	R	E	S	S	T	O	T	H	E	N	I	N	E	S
O	I	N	K	■	A	R	T	U	R	O	■	S	T	Y
B	O	E	I	N	G	■	■	T	A	T	I	■	■	■
E	S	T	■	E	E	L	S	■	■	U	S	H	E	R
■	■	■	F	A	S	H	I	O	N	P	L	A	T	E
L	A	B	O	R	■	A	L	D	A	■	A	N	A	S
B	L	U	R	B	■	S	A	I	L	■	N	O	P	E
J	I	M	M	Y	■	A	S	E	A	■	D	I	E	T

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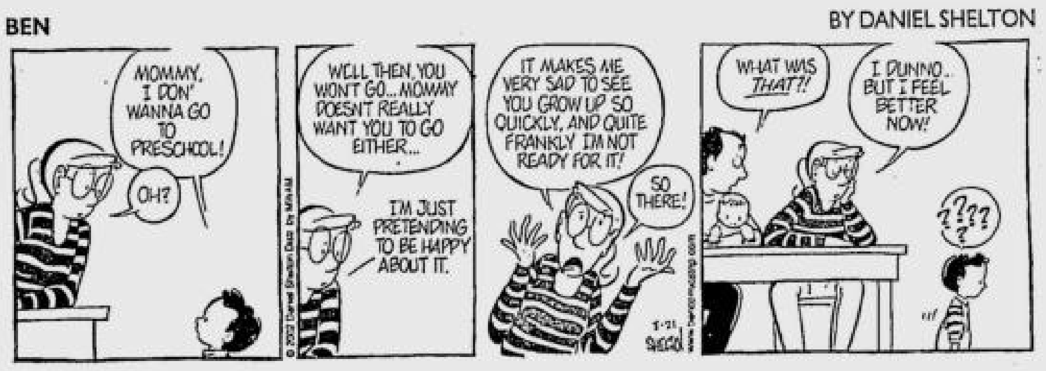
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON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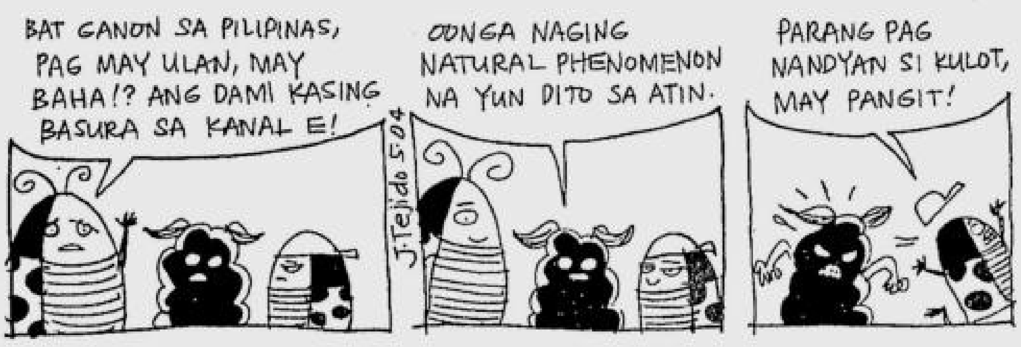
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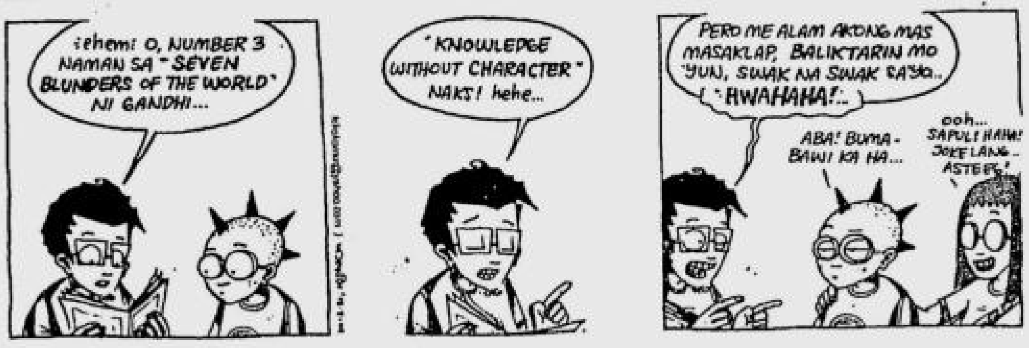
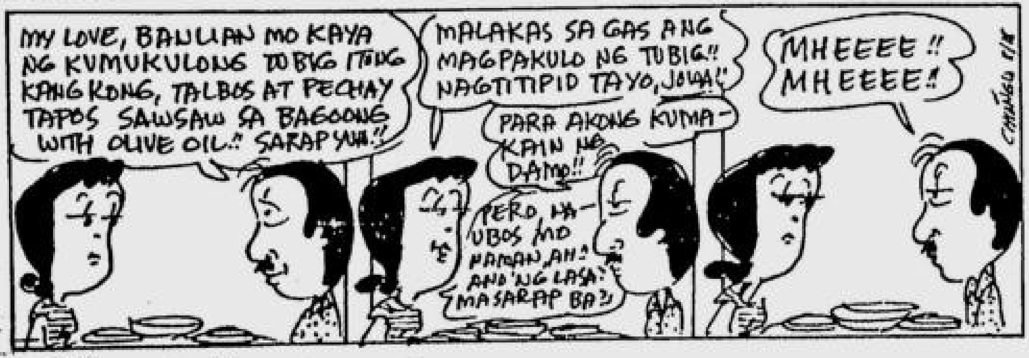
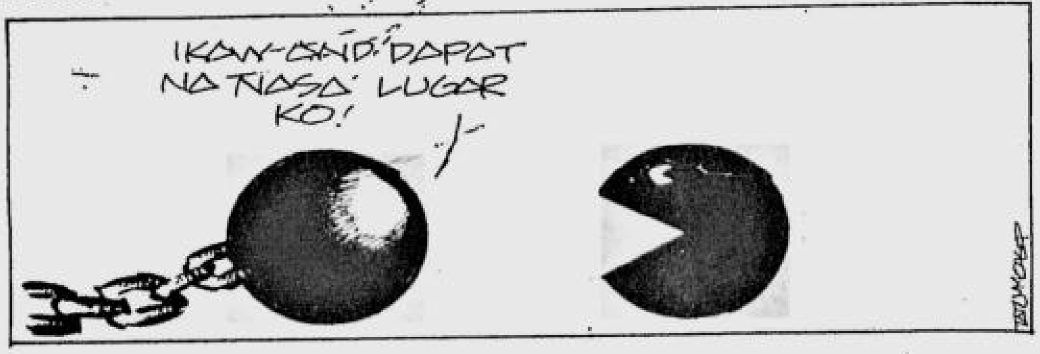

ehem! O, NUMBER 3 NAMAN SA "SEVEN BLUNDERS OF THE WORLD" NI GANDHI...
"KNOWLEDGE WITHOUT CHARACTER" NAKS! hehe...
PERO ME ALAM AKONG MAS MASAKLAP, BALIKTARIN MO 'YUN, SWAK NA SWAK SA'YO.. HWAHAHA!
ABA! BUMA-BAWI KA HA...
ooh... SAPUL! HAHA! JOKE LANG.. ASTEG!

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

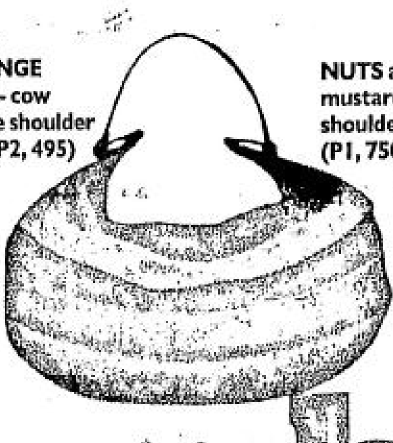

MY LOVE, BANLIAN MO KAYA NG KUMUKULONG TUBIG ITONG KANGKONG, TALBOS AT PECHAY TAPOS SAWSAW SA BAGOONG WITH OLIVE OIL!! SARAP YUN!!
MALAKAS SA GAS ANG MAGPAKULO NG TUBIG!! NAGTITIPID TAYO, JOWA!!
PARA AKONG KUMA-KAIN NG DAMO!!
PERO NA-UBOS MO NAMAN, AH! ANO'NG LASA? MASARAP BA?
MHEEEE!! MHEEEE!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


IKAW-GAND! DAPAT NA NASA LUGAR KO!

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

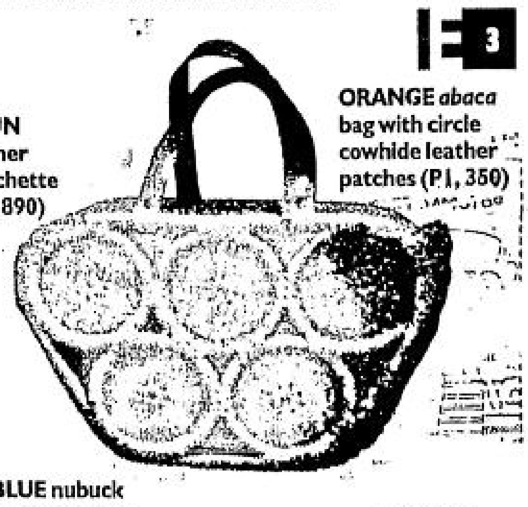
HARLEQUIN olive and mustard combination cow suede-cowhide shoulder bag (P1, 995)



ORANGE multi- cow suede shoulder bag (P2, 495)

NUTS and mustard suede shoulder bag (P1, 750)

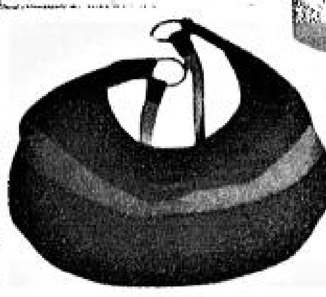
BRUN leather pouchette (P1, 890)



ORANGE *abaca* bag with circle cowhide leather patches (P1, 350)

The seduction of bags

Text and Photos by Cheryl Tiu
2bU! Correspondent



BLUE multi-cow suede shoulder bag (P2, 495)

BLUE nubuck and cow suede patchwork bag (P3,295)

BRANDY flash leather shoulder bag (P4, 295)

ALL ITEMS CURRENTLY ON SALE UNTIL THE NEW COLLECTION ARRIVES.

Do you want us to visit your stores or check out your wares? E-mail us at thefashionfreaks@yahoo.com

TO BE A MATERIALIST is to be seduced by the world's goods. Sometimes, having them can induce quite a fascination. Such is the case when they successfully fuse leather with color, raising the items to the level of class. And this is what Filipinas Alfa has done.

A design export company, which has penetrated the markets of the USA, Canada, Europe and Japan since 1997, Filipinas Alfa has come. It's known locally as, simply, Alfa.

So why come home after being so lucratively licensed by department stores Talbots and Dillards, sports store Rawlings—and even after having appeared in several Hollywood films?

"We wanted to tap the local market," Alfa consultant Pia Rojas explains. "There is so much potential because the existing local bag companies don't really cater to the customers' diverse tastes, particularly ladies' leather bags."

Alfa has the right to say this because its bags are manufactured from a global pool of resources. Alfa bags use European leather (the same one used by Hermès, Gucci, Bottega Veneta and Coach), put together by Japanese technology (with Japanese technicians supervising the process) and of course, and show the ingenuity of Filipino design and craftsmanship.

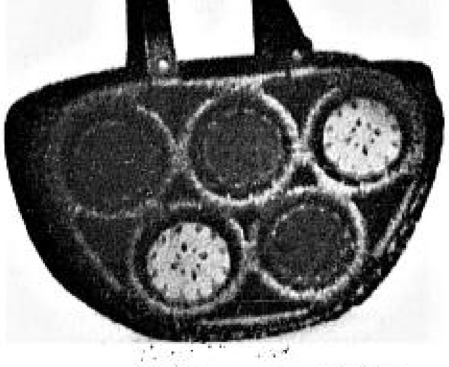
Another thing that differentiates Alfa from its other local counterparts is its large manufacturing capability. It has five factories. All Alfa purchases are given a one-year warranty, as well as repair and maintenance. Alfa also custom-designs bags, so customers can just bring the bags they want to be copied.

Currently, Alfa has three lines: classic (corporate), urban (function and mobility) and hype (fun and unique). Apart from reinventing the ladies' bags, Alfa is also about local pride. "Instead of Filipinos buying knock-off foreign brands, they can buy the same quality manufactured locally." Rojas says. A good excuse for materialism.

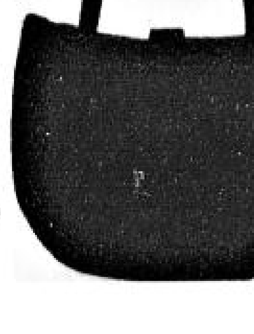
Alfa has shops at Eastwood City (Fashion Square), Robinsons Place Ermita, Robinsons Galleria and Festival Mall. Alfa bags are also available at the House of Laurel, Solea in Rockwell and Exodus in Glorietta 3.

E-mail the author at chertiu@gmail.com

SABLE crunch leather and suede tote (P2, 395)



BLUE *abaca* bag with circle cowhide leather patches (P1, 150)



BLACK semi-veg tote bag (P2, 895)

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Unfeminine 'bigote' and other unsightly irritants

Vanity Fare

Lora Gabol

FOR the second installment of my top beauty lists, I'll be riding on the majority of the suggestions I've received through mail. Most of the products I'll be listing here can very well stand on their own, but work even better when used in synergy with the other products included in their respective lists. Also, I will be adding my favorite services—from salons, spas and skin clinics—that also address your beauty needs. It looks like I'll be dedicating a couple more weeks for my lists, so keep those suggestions coming!

5 ways to remove unwanted hair

1) **Sally Hansen Crème Hair Remover for the Face.** For that stubborn *bigote*, cream depilatories work best, especially if you have very low tolerance for the pulling and tugging waxing entails. Depilatories are usually notorious in the smell department, but while this product doesn't exactly smell like a bouquet of fresh flowers, its smell won't render you unconscious. If you're the allergic type, however, it might be better to stick with the more "physical" hair removal methods.

2) **Body Natur Waxing Kit.** If you prefer good old waxing to more high-tech methods, this is the most convenient kit out there. It comes with all you'll need for a fuss-free at-home session, plus a handy electric heater to melt the wax in! I've experienced allergies to "flavored" waxes before, but this all-natural formula won't hurt even the most sensitive skin.

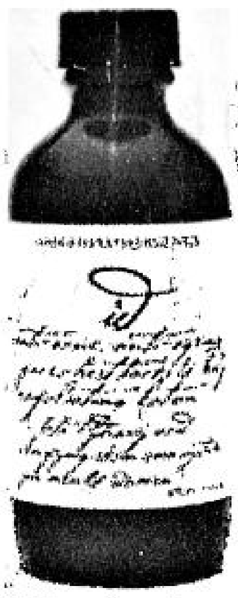
3) **Eyebrow Threading at Basecut Salon.** My first threading session was pleasant—no tears and nasty nicks. I had the service done at Basecut Salon in Libis. I've gone to around three other establishments to try their threading services out, but no other salon came as close as the smooth and perfectly shaped results I'd get at Basecut. You might want to try full-face threading, too, for a silky complexion you'll love.

4) **Waxing at Basecut Salon.** Obviously, I trust one name when it comes to professional hair removal. I learned my lesson the hard way when, on the unfortunate occasion that Basecut was closed and I badly needed a wax, I ended up, not only on terra incognita, but with ugly cuts (not nicks) all over! At Basecut, look for Jocelyn. She won't torture you, I promise.

5) **Laser Hair Removal at the Belo Medical Group.** Got the budget? Go for nothing less than laser, especially if you want to live a razor-free life. Belo speaks for itself, I know, but it is the most trusted establishment for high-tech beauty services. Visit one of their branches and consult their in-house dermatologists for the hair removal service that's best for you.

5 ways to fade scars and skin discoloration

1) **Godiva Skin Lightening System.** I swear by this line for the simple reason that it does not make promises it can't keep. It won't bleach you into Snow-Whiteness, but in time, does help fade flat, pigmented areas (not keloids), and does not cause breakouts that will worsen the scar problem. Take note of the operative words "in time." Be patient!



VMV Hypoallergenics Id Face and Body Lotion

Sally Hansen
CREME
HAIR REMOVER

SALLY Hansen Crème Hair Remover for the Face

2) **Neutrogena Fine Fairness UV Powder.** Makeup isn't really known to keep skin healthy, but because of modern research, beauty houses have found ways to incorporate skincare in makeup. I chose this because it really does help even out skin, it's perfect for Asian complexions, it won't clog your pores and give you zits, and it's the cheapest of its kind (including its many benefits) in the market today.

3) **L'oreal White Perfect Spot Corrector.** I'd use this on both my face and body. I'd use it all over my face (just because it says spot corrector doesn't mean you apply it on spots only), but am more conscientious when I apply it on my body (that's when I only use it on spots). I noticed that it slowly lightened some of my post-acne inflammation after a couple of weeks. Nothing drastic, but that's how lightening should be.

4) **VMV Hypoallergenics Id Face and Body Lotion.** This product didn't have "lightening" anywhere in its description, but I noticed that, not only does it exfoliate to keep skin smooth and bump free, it lightens minor scars and blotchy spots as a "side effect," too. How's that for multi-tasking?

5) **Intense Pulsed Light (IPL) Photorejuvenation at the Belo Medical Group.** After a really bad breakout caused by, ironically, a high-end whitening line, I ran to an expert to salvage my complexion. IPL was my savior! After just two sessions spaced two weeks apart, I had my (semi-) porcelain face back! This service is best for acne scars, though it's marketed as an anti-aging procedure. It's a miracle worker!

Next week: Acne solutions and evening makeup

Belo Medical Group, call 0917-8409268 (Philippine Stock Exchange Center branch) or 0917-8913762 (Greenhills branch); Basecut Libis, call 6870209; L'Oreal, Neutrogena, Godiva, Sally Hansen and Body Natur at PCX; VMV Hypoallergenics at department stores and Watson's.

E-mail the author at lora_gahol@yahoo.com or pdi_vanityfare@hotmail.com

Join UST campus investigative press award

IN CELEBRATION of the campus press in the country, the Varsitarian, the 76-year-old official student publication of the University of Santo Tomas, is sponsoring the 2004 National Campus Investigative Journalism Award.

The award was established by Julio S. Macaranas Jr., a retired Washington-based legal editor and former editor in chief of the Varsitarian, in honor of his late mother, Mercedes S. Macaranas, who encouraged him to write.

The Award will be the highlight of Inkblots 2004: The Sixth UST National Journalism Fellowship on Oct. 18-20 at the Thomas Aquinas Research Complex.

All student organs in the college/university level nationwide are eligible to join. The entry, in English or Filipino, may be authored by a writer or a team (whole publication). The investigative report should have been published between October 2003 and September 2004. It should be endorsed as authentic by the publication adviser/s or by a Journalism or Communications professor. Submit entries to the Varsitarian office, Rm. 112, UST Main Bldg., España, Manila. Deadline is Oct. 8. If sent by mail, entries should be stamped not later than Oct. 8.

Entries should be accurate, objective, critical but constructive, well-researched and fair. The author/s of the winning entry will receive P30,000 cash, eBookman subscription, books from the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism and other incentives. The student organ will receive P20,000. The judges may modify any or all of the prizes if they believe no entry fully meets the criteria.

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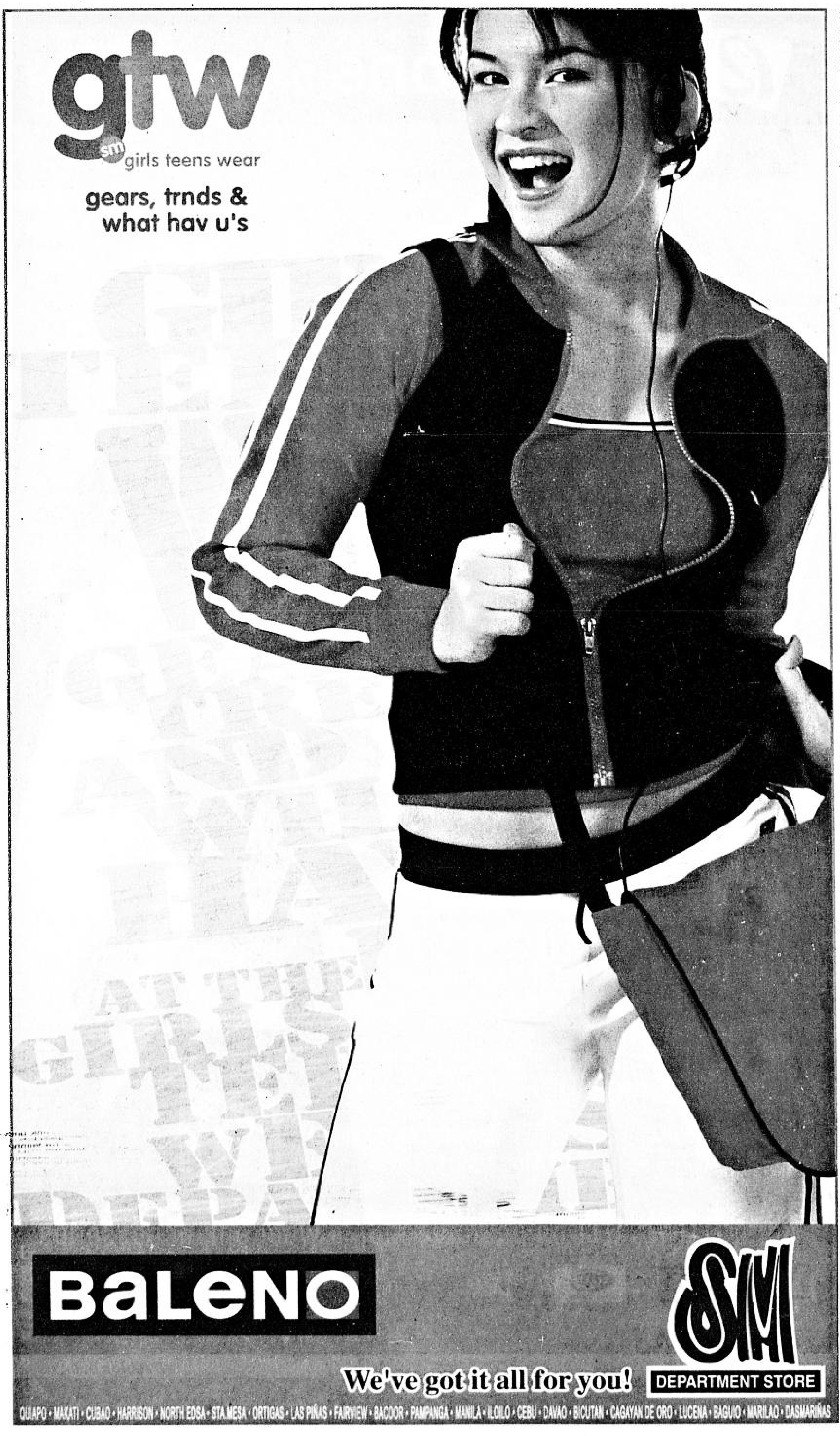
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